A DIAMOND CROWN FOR CHRIST THE KING

SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION

A Diamond Crown
for
Christ the King

CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF ANGELS
Glen Riddle, Pa.

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A Diamond Crown for Christ the King

A STORY OF THE FIRST FRANCISCAN FOUNDATION IN OUR COUNTRY

1855-1930

BY

SISTER MARY BARNABA, O. S. F., M. A.

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THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS
CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF ANGELS,
LA VERNA HEIGHTS,
GLEN RIDDLE, PA.
1930

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29. Oct., 1929

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BY THE WALTHER PRINTING HOUSE, PHILADELPHIA

Dedication

To the memory of
Reverend Mother Mary Francis
to whose noble sacrifice
the Community owes its
existence, this book is
gratefully and affectionately
dedicated.

Preface

IN this year of Our Lord, 1930, the Philadelphia Foundation of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis will celebrate its Diamond Jubilee. To mark the event fittingly, a member of the Sisterhood has written a book to present and to preserve the record of the first seventy-five years of effort and accomplishment. This historical sketch outlines briefly the origin and subsequent religious work of these good Sisters in many parishes, missions, and religious institutions of the country. And fortunate indeed were the Bishops who were able to secure their valuable assistance.

As a prefatory note it may be indicated that this Jubilee Book is in the nature of an intimate, personal narrative of a Congregation in which the "Non Nobis Domine" is a constant watchword. Not only are interesting events and circumstances set forth; but a genuine Franciscan spirit is displayed, accompanied by religious ideals of the highest order. Herein is told anew the fascinating story of the harmonious interweaving of a life of self-sacrifice, enriched by an earnest love of work for God's sake and a reverential spirit of prayer.

The viewpoint of the author is that of the true religious. Believing that the ideals of Bishop Neumann and of Mother Francis are (under God) the true guiding lives of the Congregation, she asks only that these ideals be vigorously maintained.

The Providence of God has given the Church in the great Northwest these spiritual daughters of St. Francis as a rich endowment; for not all the wealth of the world as such can furnish forth one religious. A vocation from God, and His holy grace assisting the co-operation of the one called, alone can bring into being the sacrificial religious.

Who can tell what blessings these holy women have brought to the Church, or what benefits to mankind? Pastors of souls will readily testify to the immense influence for good wrought by these Franciscan Sisters in parishes throughout the country. Besides their educational work in the Church, the world in general has reaped a generous harvest of blessings by their corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Where is suffering in body and in soul which these angels of Divine Charity have not alleviated?

Knowing from personal observation through many years that a number of parishes in the Province of Portland in Oregon have enjoyed the fruits of the labors of these worthy Sisters, we are convinced that this Congregation is still true to its original aim; namely, to devote itself to works of charity and mercy as Tertiaries of the gentle Poverello of Assisi. The spirit of Saint Francis is made abundantly manifest in the academies; parochial schools; and homes for the orphan, the sick, and the afflicted which are conducted by the Sisters. And we are well assured that so long as this endures, the special blessing of God, through the intercession of their Seraphic Father, will rest upon the Sisters of the Congregation.

The invitation to write this Preface affords us an opportunity of which we gladly avail ourselves to express our undying gratitude to the Sisters of St. Francis on behalf of our clergy and our people. For forty-five years they have done most faithful work in Oregon. In a cheerful spirit they have rendered excellent pioneer service in this struggling young diocese of Baker City, by an unselfish performance of works of charity and by giving Christian instruction to our poor children in their educational establishments. We pray that their Lord and Master may continue to bestow abundant blessings upon all their works that they may still further advance the Cross of Christ.

+ Joseph F. McGrath

Bishop of Baker City.

Baker, Oregon,
January 14, 1930.

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HIS EMINENCE, DENIS CARDINAL DOUGHERTY

Foreword

ON this occasion of the diamond jubilee of the Religious Congregation whose past has been partially recorded in the present volume some may ask why the Church permits so many different Orders to exist. Why not unite all the various Sisterhoods into one glorious whole? One need not seek far for the answer to this query.

The one great mission of the Church of Christ is to save souls, to draw all hearts to the love and service of their Creator, and thereby lead them on to an eternal union with Him in Heaven. No one will deny that human nature, though essentially the same in all men, is capable of and subject to a variety of manifestations. Hence it is that the Church, the fond Mother of us all, adapting herself to her children's needs and characters, makes use of manifold means to attain her essential aim. And so we find her encouraging and fostering many Congregations of religious devoted to her cause, and from each of these she expects a service in keeping with its spirit. In other words, she asks each to specialize along a particular line, to emphasize one or the other phase of the vast spiritual and temporal activity necessarily called forth in the attainment of her purpose. It was thus that Pope Pius IX, of holy memory, acted when he enjoined upon Bishop Neumann the task of founding a new Community whose special field of labor should be here in our own land, and whose special virtues should be summed up in the one word "Franciscan."

The history of the Philadelphia Foundation of the Sisters of St. Francis is one that cannot fail to interest all who truly love the Church of God. Like the little grain of mustard seed, symbolic of the Church itself, this Institute has grown from lowly and insignificant beginnings; it has increased and spread its beneficent influence over this dear land; it has drawn closer to God souls innumerable. And why, we may ask, has this been so? Because it is the work of the Most High. His Hand can be seen guiding this Sisterhood from its inception until today. The spirit of the Seraph of Assisi has hovered over these chosen souls. The humble Francis has taught them the fundamental virtues of humility and charity. They have, accordingly, pressed forward unobtrusively and silently in the cause of their Divine King. Like gentle drops of dew, for the most part unnoticed, their kindly deeds and beautiful lives have been a sweet refreshment to numerous souls and a consolation to the Church. Nay, more—each is a diamond for the crown of Christ the King. Only the angels of God could reveal to us their true worth.

No wonder, then, that all rejoice on this occasion of the diamond jubilee of the foundation of this Congregation. Our hearty congratulations are extended to all its members. Upon each of them, as upon the whole Congregation, we call down the Divine Blessing. May the spirit of their early members, which, thank God, they have preserved intact these seventy-five years, continue to animate them in their labors of love! It is our fond hope that this narrative of Franciscan devotion to the glory of God and the salvation of souls may be but the prelude of that illustrious record which shall be unfolded before our gaze when at last we behold Christ our King in eternal glory.

✠ D. CARDINAL DOUGHERTY,
Archbishop of Philadelphia.

November 8, 1929.

A Diamond Crown
for
Christ the King

A STORY OF THE
FIRST FRANCISCAN FOUNDATION
IN OUR COUNTRY
1855-1930

PART I

Introduction

Introduction

WITHIN a circuit of gardens, orchards, and fields of grain, in the old Quaker Colony of William Penn, stands the Convent of Our Lady of Angels, mother house and novitiate of the Sisters of St. Francis.

Beyond the confines of the stately convent lie low, rounded hills, crowned with forests of oak, hickory and maple. "God's first temples" these woodlands are whose floors in the halcyon days of spring are bedecked with a profusion of snowy white blossoms of the humble dogwood which contrast with the delicately-tinted trailing arbutus, the little sweet-scented violets, and the lacy ferns that grow between. On the slopes, thickets of mountain laurel provide safe refuge for the fox and quail, fleeing from the woodsman whose busy axe resounds in the echoing forest above. The music of Nature's minstrels, "our little sisters, the birds," breaks the silence of the woods,—the somber-hued songsters, the mocking-bird and the ever-present robin of the North, vying with the more brilliantly-hued oriole, thrush, and cardinal in singing the praises of the great Creator.

Verdant meadows threaded with sparkling streams alternate with the outcropping hills,—meadows "figured with beds of flowers and flecked with sheep as white as snow."

Happy farmsteads with their neat-trimmed cottages and well stocked barns dot the landscape and are suggestive of the peace and plenty that have come as an inheritance to the dwellers of the old Quaker Colony of Brotherly Love.

Nearby, the quiet little village of Glen Riddle rests peacefully on the slope of a hill, quite unconscious that what distinction it can claim among the little hamlets on the highway to one of our great commercial centers, is due merely to its close proximity to the mother house of a progressive Community of religious women.

The lordly Delaware River, like a shining silvery thread in the distance, wends its way seaward, and scarcely a score of miles away, the historic city of Philadelphia is outlined dimly blue against the sky.

In the vista of smiling valleys and forest-crowned hills, all blends harmoniously to form a magnificent panorama of gorgeous landscape, which proclaims the master hand of the great Creator, and which might have called forth from the Sweet Singer of Umbria his soul-stirring canticle,

> **"Praised be my Lord and God for Mother Earth,**
> **Who governs and sustains us; Who gives birth**
> **To all the many fruits and herbs that be;**
> **And colored flowers in rich variety."**

The massive walls of the spacious convent glistening in the sunshine bespeak the blessings bestowed through Heaven's Queen upon her children in this hallowed sanctuary, each stone of which is a mute testimony of the toils and sacrifices of the Sisters of the first Franciscan Foundation in the land of Mary Immaculate.

Through the sacred convent portals have entered numerous bands of virgins to be enrolled under the standard of the Seraphic Saint of Assisi, and to be schooled in the various duties of the religious life, in order to carry out the two-fold mission of laboring for their own sanctification and the welfare of their neighbor. In this happy abode their hearts have been filled with the zeal, the ardent love of God and their neighbor, and the heroic fortitude needed in future years on the battle-field of life.

With that simple-hearted joyousness characteristic of the children of St. Francis, many fervent souls have gone forth from their cherished retreat "to temper the spiritual atmosphere of the world" with their kindly ministrations; while others more favored still, have remained "at the Master's feet," like Esther of old, to plead before the Divine King. Each shares the glad conviction that she has been chosen from the multitude to occupy a special place in the plan of God's creation, and has the blessed assurance of Christ's own words, "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you."

It is now with propriety that we ask our readers to accompany us to the various scenes in the history of the first Foundation of the spiritual Daughters of St. Francis in our country, for it is the jubilee year with its diamond milestone marking the long journey over which it has passed. Before approaching our subject directly, however, we shall make a brief consideration of the life of St.

Francis, which, as Dante says, would better be sung among the glories of Heaven. Of all those bright luminaries whom God has placed in the galaxy of saints, none reflects more widely the glowing lights of the Heavenly City. In none are more fully realized the ideals of regenerated human nature. In the Sweet Singer of Umbria have been blended, as perhaps in no other, those charming characteristics that captivate the popular mind and make holiness and happiness synonymous. His joyousness and gladness of heart have ever been an inspiration to his spiritual children whom he would ever have as God's troubadours "to sing before everyman's door of the beauty and delight of serving the Lord."

PART II

The Hero of Assisi

ST. FRANCIS

The Hero of Assisi

"Hail to thee, O blest St. Francis,
Image of the Crucified!"

NATIONS have attempted to perpetuate the memory of those departed heroes who spent their lives in defence of their country's honor, have tried to compensate those who endeavored in poetry and song to enhance the nation's glory. History records their deeds; monuments bear their epitaphs; arches proclaim their triumphs. But "history fades into fable; the inscription moulders from the tablet; columns, arches, pyramids—what are they but heaps of sand?"

The conquests of Alexander the Great who wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, left no lasting benefits on the nations subjected, for scarcely had the body of the great warrior been consigned to the tomb when through revolt his conquests came to naught; and now with his ashes scattered to the winds, his empty sarcophagus alone remains as an eloquent reminder to the world of the emptiness of human glory.

And Bonaparte, too, chained to a rock in his lonely exile on the little, billow-dashed isle of St. Helena—he whose visible presence had inspired vast armies to unbounded enthusiasm by the magic of his words and looks—was forced to cry out in his desolation, "Who cares for me now, removed as I am from the active scenes of life and from the presence of men? Who cares for me now?"

But there are other heroes whose mission is prolonged beyond the tomb. It is they whose lives have been devoted to the service of the Great King who has said, "My kingdom is not of this world,"—

"Whose works shall last
Whose names shall shine as stars on high
When deep in the dust of a ruined past
The labors of selfish souls shall lie."

These heroes are the saints of God in the spiritual kingdom of Christ's Church, which in its long course down the ages has remained unshaken and unchanged in the midst of all the varying scenes of earth.

Of these spiritual warriors, none have been of more service to the world than St. Francis of Assisi, who, in a short career of only twenty years, by the Gospel spirit of simplicity, charity, and humility, and of fervent love for Christ and sincere, disinterested service for the neighbor, exerted an influence which in its scope, permanency, and extent has never been surpassed by any other save that of the divine Redeemer Himself.

No wonder then that the world asks in amazement the secret of his power. In the saint's own day, his disciples marvelled at it also, as we learn from the words of Brother Masseo who asked his master in all candor and simplicity: "Why is it that all the world runs after thee, that everybody desires to see thee, to obey thee, since thou art a man not comely in person, nor of noble birth, nor of great learning?" Let us listen to the answer given by the humble founder of the Friars Minor, in whose countenance glowed a heavenly light as if beholding from afar the sight of the Sovereign Master, the object of all his love. "Would you know, my son," said he, "why all the world runs after me? It is because the eyes of the most High God which behold in all places the evil and the good, even those most holy eyes have not seen among sinners one more vile, nor more insufficient, nor a greater sinner than I. Yes, He has chosen a senseless man to confound the world's wisdom, and weakness and nothingness to confound nobility, power, and grandeur. And what is the teaching of that, if not that all good as well as all virtue comes from Him and not from creatures, that no flesh should glory in His sight, and that if any one glories, he ought to glory in the Lord to whom alone belongs the glory for ever and ever?"

Such was the reply of the humble man of God who could say with all sincerity, "If Christ had shown to the most wretched man on earth, such mercy as He has shown to me, I believe assuredly that that man would have been far more grateful to God than I have been."

"And if we are asked," says the Saint's biographer, "why the name of the son of Peter Bernardone has become so popular, why Christian nations have vied in exalting him, . . . we should answer that it is because God is pleased to exalt those who humble themselves, and that people hail in Francis of Assisi the most finished type of self-renunciation and compassion for the sufferings of others." If the charity of the Saviour urged him to linger at the well of Jacob in order to win to grace the lost soul of the solitary woman of Samaria, Francis would tarry by the way to heal both the body and soul of a hideous leper. And if his Lord could bear the reproach of being "the friend of sinners," so would Francis mingle with the robbers on Mount Cassale and lavish upon them the tenderest charity till grace triumphed and their souls were won for heaven. "Saintlier than any of the saints," writes Celano, "among sinners he was as one of themselves."

Francis had indeed made himself poorer than the poorest of men, but what he had left—his body and his soul, he gave without reserve to the service of his neighbor. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity," he declared, "nor show my neighbor an example of virtue, I should be of little service to him and none to myself."

Let us now consider Francis in his observance of the evangelical counsels, to which he had pledged himself with all the fervor of his ardent nature.

On account of his natural gifts of generosity and his winning personality, Francis, in his young manhood, had exercised a kind of empire over his associates. But after his marvelous conversion, so completely did grace triumph that even though invested with the highest superiorship of the Order, he wished with genuine simplicity to render obedience to some one of the brethren. At length his desires were fulfilled, when, like a simple lay brother and as a servant of the Fraternity, he could set the example of true and holy obedience. This in Francis' mind was not to be servile submission, but the "knightly fealty and service of chivalry."

In fulfilling his mission of restoring all things to Christ, Francis was deeply attached to the Vicar of Christ, to whom he completely subjected himself by a vow of obedience. Hence we find him after composing his first rule hastening with his first disciples to the Holy City to obtain the sanction and the blessing of Innocent III on the work to which they were to consecrate their lives. Well may we imagine the effect produced on the Papal Court at the sight of these poorly clad, bare-footed Penitents of Assisi, with their master pleading only for the simple permission to live after the precepts of the Holy Gospel and in all things to adhere to evangelical perfection as the Apostles had done.

The faithful lover of obedience could be no less attached to his vow of chastity. Although Francis had passed through the perils of the licentious age in which he lived with the white robe of his baptismal innocence unsullied, throughout all the years of his apostolic career, he chastised his sinless body with as much severity as though he had been the greatest criminal.

In speaking of Francis of Assisi, there are two virtues that can never be disassociated; namely, poverty and humility. He who from the beginning of his conversion had courted ridicule and contempt, and recommended humility as the first characteristic of the Friars Minor, would obey in the most literal sense of the word the Gospel injunction, "If thou wouldst be perfect, sell all thou hast and give to the poor." In the beginning of his penitential career, the son of Peter Bernardone had magnanimously divested himself of all his worldly goods; and never did anyone covet the possession of riches and honors more than the Knight of Holy Poverty sought the want of all things. As the son of the rich merchant, Francis had been magnificently lodged; but the Poor Man of Assisi would have no dwelling other than the simplest hut or cave away from the haunts of men. Naturally inclined to generosity, which led him to resolve never to refuse an alms when solicited for the love of God, he arrived with the assistance of divine grace at such heights of self-renunciation that at the close of his life he could say, "I never remember having been untrue to my Lady Poverty."

Considering the poor as the special friends of Christ, Francis was ever most eager to relieve their needs. "If I did not give," said he, as he stripped off his garment to cover a poor man—"if I did not give what I wear to him who was in more need of it than myself, I should be accused of robbery by the great Almoner of Heaven." In his gentle courtesy to the poor, he always preserved the attitude of a friend rather than a patron. The seats at his table were to be very low so that the poor beggars, who were invited to dine with the brethren, might believe that they were with their equals, and would feel no embarrassment on account of their poverty.

Absolute poverty, then, was one of the most striking characteristics of Francis' remarkable vocation. "He was most undoubtedly," as Bossuet expresses it, "the most ardent, enthusiastic and desperate lover of poverty the world has yet seen."

Such were the virtues of the Little Poor Man whom God placed in His Church to reform the money-mad world of the thirteenth century. It was the consideration of his wonderful work that called forth from the poet Tennyson seven hundred years later the ardent sigh, "O sweet St. Francis, would that he were with us again!"

But he still lives in our midst and continues his mission through his faithful followers, who in every part of the world are endeavoring by the observance of the simple precepts of the Gospel to teach men the way to righteousness and peace.

In his great-heartedness, the Seraphic Saint saw some of the perfections of God reflected in all creatures, both of the animate and the inanimate world; and in them he admired the goodness, love, and power of the Creator. "If there ever was a man," says his biographer, "who could find books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything, that man was Francis of Assisi." The Saint in his tender charity did not hesitate to stoop to remove a helpless worm from the wayside lest it be trodden under foot. He also provided nests for the birds; sheltered within the folds of his gown the little animals that sought his protection; fed the half-frozen bees; and compassionated even a hungry wolf. We should believe then that he would have great solicitude for the welfare of his fellow men. And of this we have most convincing proofs in the institution of the three Orders which form a vast army in the Church, all battling, with God's guidance, under the standard of the Cross.

In the foremost ranks are the Friars Minor, lovingly designated by Francis as his Knights of the Round Table, who are leaders in the warfare for Christ and humanity.

The Daughters of the Seraphic Virgin, St. Clare, in silence and in solitude, far from human gaze, hover near the Lord of Hosts imploring the Divine Mercy to direct those who are engaged in the warfare of life in active service for their neighbor.

But there are others in the ranks, who form the great mass of the soldiery, known as the Third Order of Penance. These while pursuing their daily vocation without quitting the world, promote the welfare of society, at least indirectly, by upholding justice and charity; by inculcating frugality and simplicity in living; and by encouraging piety and fidelity in the service of God.

In the course of time, this great battalion in the army of the Lord, through the sanction of the Church which ever devotes her energy for the common welfare, admitted virgins to live in communities under a superior. These bind themselves by vow to follow the evangelical counsels. Their work in life is to labor for their own sanctification through the performance of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

While we associate the land of Italy with the labors of Francis of Assisi, his glory is not confined to his own native country; for to him belongs the honor of being the first founder of a religious Order to make foreign mission work a special feature of the activity of the Community. Although Francis had begun his mission with only two disciples, at the end of his apostolic career of only twenty years, ten thousand were enrolled in the ranks of the Friars Minor, who were dispersed throughout the whole known world. Far away amid the snows of Tartary, the fearless men of God bore the saving Gospel to the wandering children of Khan in the Celestial Empire; under the scorching African skies, the dark-skinned natives crowded around the quaint-robed Friars to listen to the sweet story of God's redeeming love; the great populous cities, as well as the most lonely island shore, resounded with the songs of God's sweet singers who sought to make all serve the Lord in gladness of heart.

With the historian we say: "Ever since the foundation of his Order, the all-embracing spirit of St. Francis has ruled the world. There is no field of activity that the Franciscans have not attempted. In the council chamber of Church and State; in the lecture halls and laboratories of universities; on the gory field of battle; in the hovels of the destitute and forsaken; in the perilous regions of schism, heresy, idolatry, and barbarism; in hospitals and poorhouses; in asylums and leper colonies; in reformatories and prisons—everywhere have they exerted their influence and inscribed their names on the scrolls of glory as benefactors of mankind."

And thus through the labors of the faithful children of St. Francis "of every tongue and tribe and nation," has been perpetuated the work which Christ, in the hour of the mystic immolation of the Seraphic Saint on Mount La Verna, promised would subsist to the end of ages.

In the charming scene on the hills of Rome at the final leave-taking of the two great Apostles of the thirteenth century, when they conceived the plan of dividing the world between them to conquer it for the Divine King, may we not piously believe that there may have flashed before the prophetic vision of the Seraphic Saint of Assisi the great Western World where the nature-worshiping children of the forest roamed in the wilderness yet untrodden by the conqueror's foot?

In a poor Genoese sailor, a pious Tertiary of St. Francis, of the fifteenth century, there glowed an ardor for the extension of Christ's kingdom in worlds yet unconquered to the Faith. The story of his successful voyage and of his planting the Cross in the New World is well known. In the eyes of the world, Christopher Columbus was but a daring seaman who in search of wealth and glory gallantly sailed his little craft over the untried sea. But the Church discerned in the Great Admiral the indomitable spirit of a missionary and regarded him as one of her devoted champions, a true Son of St. Francis.

With the discovery of the great Western World, a new era was opened up in the history of the Seraphic Order. Father Perez, a Friar Minor, the firm friend and adviser of the pious Discoverer, and his companion on a second voyage, was privileged to be the first to offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the great Western solitudes.

The appointment of a Friar Minor as the first successor of the Apostles in the New World, gave greater security to the work of the Sons of St. Francis. As they were eminently successful in their first attempts to evangelize the red men, they pushed on with unwearying energy into the unexplored wilderness beyond the mighty Rocky Cordilleras of the Golden West, and everywhere made more conquests for Christianity. Today vestiges of the numerous missions in the South may be traced at times only by the little ruined adobe chapels by the wayside, "full of pathos and triumph in their loneliness," on which are rudely carved but the name of the dear saint to whose patronage the faithful padres piously committed their little flocks.

But not only in the colonies where "the gold emblazoned banners of Castile and Leon floated proudly under azure skies," did saintly missionaries of the Seraphic Order make marvelous progress in the evangelization and civilization of the red men. Along our northern frontiers they felled the giant trees to make their humble chapels in the pathless forests, everywhere bringing within the civilizing influences of religion the ever-retiring children of the wilderness.

Glorious indeed were the labors of the pioneer Sons of St. Francis in the New World. Although other Orders were early engaged in the work of evangelizing the Indian, the followers of St. Francis may certainly with justice claim precedence.

In the four centuries since Columbus crossed the great waters, the red men whose wild natures were subdued by the Gospel of peace, "as a race have withered from the land and their council-fires have long since gone out on the shore." Into the Western Continent "radiant beneath the effulgence of liberty's golden sun," all nations of the earth have poured to take possession of her fertile fields. With the coming of the multitudes, new duties devolved upon the Church which found ever a helping hand extended by religious Orders, none of which has rendered greater service than that of the Seraphic Saint of Assisi. From the little missions scattered among the millions went forth the appeal to the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His vineyard, for the harvest was truly great and the laborers few.

PART III

Influences in the Founding of the Community

CHAPTER

1. Venerable John N. Neumann, C. SS. R., D. D.
2. A Noble Woman's Sacrifice

THE VENERABLE JOHN N. NEUMANN, C. SS. R., D.D.

CHAPTER 1

Venerable John N. Neumann, C.SS.R., D.D.

"He shone in his days as the morning star in the midst of a cloud. . . . And as the sun when it shineth, so did he shine in the temple of God."

IN the beginning of the nineteenth century, the call of America aroused the zeal of a young seminarian, John Nepomucene Neumann, whose glorious career in the service of the Church in the New World was to add lustre to the name of the little village of Prachatitz lying on the famous Golden Path in a rich, highly cultivated valley of Bohemia.

"The natural beauty of this charming region, the surrounding mountains towering up to a considerable height, their summits clothed with dense foliage and pine trees, afford a grand and imposing view." It was amid these scenes of enchanting beauty that John Neumann was reared. As the moral and spiritual atmosphere of his home was no less invigorating than his surroundings, noble aspirations were fostered which soon revealed the fact that he was a child of predilection. From his early years, he displayed a natural goodness of heart which called forth a love for the poor and the pious ambition to enter the harvest fields of the Lord where he might labor in the sacred ministry unknown and unnoticed. In his laborious and discouraging preparation for the priesthood, his ideals of sacrifice and privations in the service of God lured his heart from the peaceful scenes of his own native land to the wild, sparsely settled plains of far-away America, which in his day was regarded as little less than a vast, uninhabitable wilderness that offered to the missionary only the prospects of hardships, persecutions, and the sacrifice of health and perhaps life itself. To John Neumann, charmingly human, with a sensitive and affectionate nature, separation from home and kindred meant a great trial. Anticipation of the blessed moment when he could offer the adorable Victim of the altar in presence of those most dear to him in life, and place his consecrated hands in benediction upon the bowed heads of his good parents, to whom above all he owed the blessings of his vocation, had been a sustaining power in the vicissitudes of his preparation for the great day of ordination. But the generous heart that God willed should one day beat beneath the pectoral cross must first be tried in the furnace of tribulation that it might be purified for the future sacrifice.

Finally preparations were completed for setting out to America. After a long and stormy voyage on the great Atlantic, the future missionary found himself at last, poor and alone in a strange land, gladdened by the sight of no familiar face, and with no friendly hand extended to greet his arrival. Well may we imagine his anxious thoughts from the words entrusted to the pages of his little journal: "Ah! I well know that no one is less worthy to enter the land in which I am resolved to serve Thee, my God. My loved parents, my brothers and sisters . . . all these I have renounced. What will my future be?"

Only after repeated trials that would have crushed a heart less great, did John Neumann reach the goal of his ambitions when he could say at last: "I am a priest, a missionary, and I have a flock."

After years of untiring devotion to the duties of his pastoral charge, the once sturdy Bohemian mountain-boy realized that the pristine vigor of his youth was gone. This was but a circumstance which in God's goodness was to determine another great epoch in the life of His faithful servant—his entrance into the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. By a happy coincidence, the year that witnessed the canonization of Alphonsus Liguori beheld the first Redemptorist foundation in America; and in those primitive days of the struggling Community, the addition of good Father Neumann to the ranks was hailed with joy. That the Sons of St. Alphonsus recognized his superior ability is evident from the high offices of superiorship entrusted to him; and that God found him worthy to belong to the Society of the Most Holy Redeemer may be inferred from the fact that when humbled, despised, and neglected, he could say with calm resignation while clasping the image of His crucified Lord, "My dearest Jesus, all for Thee!"

God who is ever attentive to the smallest service done for His glory, regarded with favor the good, faithful pastor, of whom He might have said, "Because thou hast been faithful over the few, I will make thee ruler over many;" and through His mystic Spouse, the Church, presented to the humble, astonished Redemptorist his insignia as successor of the Apostles in the great See of Philadelphia.

Sixteen years had passed since John Neumann, the devout aspirant to the Catholic Priesthood and the future "Harbinger of Christ," had hopefully looked forward to his entrance into the Quaker City in the Land of Liberty beyond the great sea, where he might serve the interests of God and the Church. But the services of German priests were not needed, he was informed after months of weary waiting; and the patient, aspiring Levite had again to pray and wait for the manifestation of God's will, which was to exalt His humble servant at a far distant day to the highest ranks of the Church.

Obedient to the voice of duty, Father Neumann, a true Son of Saint Alphonsus, a Redemptorist heart and soul, assumed the duties of the episcopal office in the great See whose first shepherd, chosen from the ranks of the Friars Minor, had led the scattered sheep of the flock over the rough fields of pioneer days.

The painful emotions which the thought of the great responsibilities of the episcopacy excited in the heart of the humble prelate, can well be learned from his own words: "If our Lord gave me the choice either to die or to accept this dignity, I should prefer to lay down my life tomorrow rather than be consecrated Bishop; for my salvation would be more secure at the judgment-seat of God than it will be if I appear before it burdened with the responsibility of a bishopric."

It was, indeed, not without a struggle that he severed the loved ties that bound him to community life. Henceforth, he must walk alone along the narrow way in the company only of the Invisible Friend to whom he had confidently clung in the dark days of his preparation for the holy priesthood when for him there seemed to be no room, and he wandered without a guide in uncertainty and doubt.

The episcopal city, the cradle of liberty, dear to the American heart by so many sacred associations in the development of its national life, with its old traditions of friendship and friendliness, welcomed the new Shepherd whose heroic labors were to add other brilliant pages to its already glorious history. Here the standard of the Cross had been borne ere the joyful peals of the Liberty Bell had sounded the first notes of freedom. Among the "Old Continentals, in their ragged regimentals" who had crossed the ice-bound Delaware to the victory which kindled the fires of patriotism anew, were those above whose tombs the Stars and Stripes now waving beside the Cross, tell the story of loyalty to both God and country.

In the "mansion of freedom" the home fires of faith had been kept burning by zealous prelates of the pioneer Church. It was the saintly Bishop Neumann, however, who was to kindle anew the fire of God's love; and with his inspired vision to secure for future generations the blessings of a lively faith through the example of his own holy life, and by activities "fostered by study and made fruitful by incomparable generosity of soul."

As monuments to the zeal of the faithful Shepherd are the fifty churches erected in less than a decade of years, by him who knew no surcease of labor. Memories of the saintly Bishop still linger in the hearts of the old pioneers who now walk with faltering steps up the well-worn aisles. In these primitive sanctuaries there still seems to echo the sweet incense of the prayers of the holy Prelate who consecrated their venerable walls.

But far greater was the work of the "spiritual architect" in rearing temples of the Holy Ghost through efficient means provided for the Christian education of youth. "As the very counterpart of our Lord, the Friend of children," the good Bishop went among the little ones as a tender, loving father, ever interested in their innocent games and attentive to their childish questionings.

"The parochial schools of the whole diocese of Philadelphia and especially of the city itself," says Clarke, "increased wonderfully during his administration and became the crowning glory of his work." With an increase in the number of these schools from two to one hundred during the eight years of his episcopate, the zealous Bishop could say in the last months of his life: "God has so wonderfully blessed the work of education that nearly every church of my diocese has its own parish school."

With his natural endowments of genuine charity, winning courtesy, and charming simplicity, his co-laborers in the sacred ministry found in the genial, saintly Bishop a kind and sympathetic father, who urged them, "to perpetuate, and to communicate the perfections of Christ to mankind, and to be a light for men in their needs."

The welfare of the various religious Orders was another object dear to Bishop Neumann's heart. In them he took the liveliest interest; for in all that concerned them he was as solicitous as a father for his well-beloved family. To them he looked for assistance in the charitable enterprises that multiplied under his guiding hand; and he felt assured that their pious labors drew down upon his diocese abundant blessings.

Although the services of these devoted religious were invaluable, beyond the scope of their activities were other fields ripe for the harvest—fields of human misery and affliction, where the poor of the great diocese raised their suppliant hands for the alms of charity, and for compassion in the great struggle of life.

It is a significant fact that in the lives of God's saints a love for the poor has often been a controlling factor in the attainment of perfection. It was this virtue which worked so many prodigies in the Seraphic Saint of Assisi, who filled with glittering coins the hands of the ragged beggars in whom he recognized only the resplendent image of Christ. Of the Umbrian Poverello, we find a counterpart in the saintly Bishop Neumann, whose characteristic virtues of poverty, humility, and a tender sympathy for every phase of human woe led him to regard as the favorite portion of his flock those over whom sorrow and misfortune had cast the halo of suffering.

The city of refuge into which had poured home-seekers from all the nations of the earth, had its burden of sorrow too great to be borne by the few faithful laborers. The good Bishop, realizing this, conceived the project of adding a new glory to the Church by introducing into the diocese a religious Community whose beneficent influence would promote the interests of religion not only in his own day but in future years as well.

Over the vast diocese God was silently watching. And He who never slights the faintest breath of prayer was quietly preparing those who, in His own good time, would enter the harvest fields of the Church to glean the golden grain. "God's preparations," it has been well said, "are slow, but when His time has come He works swiftly and surely."

For the establishment of a religious Community there was needed the sanction of the tribunal which is the voice of God on earth,—that of the Church through its white-robed Shepherd in the chair of Peter.

Providence so ordained that the blessing of the new undertaking should be reserved to Pius IX, who alone of all the Sovereign Pontiffs had exercised the sacred duties of the priesthood in the New World. An auspicious occasion presented itself when the eyes of the whole Catholic world were turned "to her who next to God is indeed, the eternal joy and glory of the heavens and the ever-blessed hope of fallen man;" when the Church placed upon the fair brow of the Queen of Virgins her glorious lily-wreathed crown of the Immaculate Conception.

No prelate who had been summoned to the Eternal City by the Father of Christendom to attend the august ceremonies was more eager to participate than the Redemptorist Bishop of Philadelphia, whose tender devotion to the Blessed Mother of God had made her the repository of all his hopes and most earnest desires. While strains of the joyful songs that acclaimed the triumph of the Lily of Israel still echoed in the Holy City, and the devout clients of the Virgin Mother yet lingered at the holy shrines of the Immaculate Queen, the Bishop of Philadelphia, humbly kneeling at the feet of the Vicar of Christ to give an account of his stewardship, presented his cherished plan for the organization of a religious body of women who were to be his co-laborers for the salvation of souls.

The venerable Pontiff, by whose authority the "land of the noble Washington" had been consecrated to the Immaculate Conception, needed no urgent solicitations; for Pius IX, it has been said, regarded every religious Order as a fragrant flower in the garden of the Church, and he loved every flower of this garden and every new flower that his gardener placed there. It was this illustrious Pontiff who, of all those enrolled in the spiritual militia of penitence, loved to call himself a son of St. Francis, and whose love for the characteristic virtue of the Poor Man of Assisi may be inferred from the incident which relates that, after having given his last cent to promote a charitable enterprise, he exclaimed, "Poor Pius IX has nothing left; but he must not complain, for he has not forgotten that he is a Tertiary of St. Francis." The Sovereign Pontiff was mindful, too, of the fact that among the glories of the Seraphic Order, none is more prized than that her most illustrious scholars have regarded their lives and works as belonging to the Immaculate Mother whose most glorious prerogative they have defended by their brilliant arguments.

We need not, then, be surprised that in an interview with the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann, His Holiness advised that instead of introducing religious into the diocese, a new community should be founded therein, and recommended further that the Rule of St. Francis would be the most suitable for the new Community to follow in the great diocese where the performance of humble duties would require so much sacrifice.

With the sanction and blessing of the Vicar of Christ upon the proposed foundation, the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann had every reason to hope for the successful outcome of his pious undertaking; for, like St. Francis, the holy Bishop recognized the papal authority as the guardian of every virtue and the hope of the future.

In this first foundation of the Daughters of St. Francis in the land of the Immaculate Conception,* which has ever been regarded by the Seraphic Order as its own spiritual inheritance, we see but a continuance of the mystery of Bethlehem—"God still wills to give Himself to the world through Mary,"

"Woman! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast."

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* Several Franciscan Communities which had been founded in Europe opened missions in the United States at an earlier date.

REVEREND MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, O. S. F.

CHAPTER 2

A Noble Woman's Sacrifice

"God in a way they have not known
Shall lead His own."

TRULY has it been said that there is a long chain of contributing circumstances leading up to every great influence that is exerted in the world. While history records the achievements of nations and individuals, it does not discern the secret springs, the mysterious workings of Divine Providence, by which events are produced. Ordinarily God's designs are brought about by slow processes such as are followed in the law of growth, so that advances from day to day are imperceptible and call forth no comment. At times, however, God manifests Himself in a marvelous manner, and uses as instruments for the accomplishment of His will those whom He invests with extraordinary power, which causes them to stand forth like superterrestrial beings, and forces the world to exclaim: "Here is the hand of God! How wonderful are His ways!"

No greater instance of man's powerlessness and God's omnipotence can be cited than the remarkable means adopted to establish and perpetuate the Christian religion. For the Mother of the world's Redeemer there was chosen a humble, unknown maiden of Judea. After an obscure life spent in the home of His foster-father, St. Joseph, a poor carpenter of Nazareth, Christ appeared in public but for a brief time and chose as His associates twelve poor, illiterate fishermen, each one of whom might have said of himself, "My speech and my preaching are not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of the spirit . . . and the power of God." It was through these men that the true Faith was first propagated.

No less apparently feeble instruments has God chosen in later years to carry out His designs. To a little captive shepherd boy on the green hills of Erin God revealed the secrets of His heart and made of him the great apostle of the Isle of Saints; Genevieve, a humble, French peasant girl, courageous in the strength of the

Lord, turned back the devastating armies of the fierce leader of the Huns, and saved her people from destruction; and the youthful Rose of Viterbo pleaded the cause of the Holy See in the public square of her native village and secured the triumph of the Church.

Women consecrated to God's service, remarkable for apostolic zeal and the most eminent sanctity, have their share too in the labor and the glory of spreading the Faith and of uplifting humanity by employing themselves in the practice of the pure and undefiled religion of which St. James speaks. In their mission they become spiritual mothers to orphans and perform the office of the Good Samaritan through their care of the poor, the blind, the maimed. These serve God with a devotion not bought with gold nor inspired by glory, save that of securing the salvation of divinely redeemed souls.

Mindful of the words of St. James, "The continual prayer of the righteous availeth much," other Spouses of Christ in the seclusion of the cloister devote their lives to the service of their neighbor, breathing out their pure souls in sighs to Heaven for the guilty race. These are indeed the power behind the throne of the great God of justice—staying the hand of the offended Majesty, praising and adoring Him in cloistral choir, and, like sentinels, keeping watch before the King of kings on His Eucharistic throne on earth.

"The fruits of these zealous servants of God," says Archbishop Ireland, "are most rich, and much of the ground now golden with harvest would without them have lain fallow and barren."

While the aim of each Spouse of Christ is to pass through life with no other ambition than to earn for herself the record, "She has passed by doing good," there are some whose influence has had much to do in shaping human affairs and who deserve special mention.

It was the saintly Abbess Hilda through whom the great monastery at Whitby was founded and acquired its fame as the nursery of scholars and saints many of whom became of valuable service to the Church in the struggle against paganism.

One of the most remarkable women of the Emerald Isle was St. Brigid, founder of conventual life in Ireland and of the famous institution of Kildare, which became the center of religion and learning and developed into a cathedral city under her supervision.

After a lapse of fifteen centuries, the memory of this holy religious still lives in the songs and literature of her country and is enshrined in the hearts of Erin's daughters, who lovingly call her the Mary of Ireland.

When worldly prosperity began to undermine the foundations of society in the thirteenth century, God raised up St. Clare, who was to be a co-founder of an Order whose consecrated virgins "like the stars, the flowers, and the Seraphim, praised God night and day." The irresistible charm which St. Clare threw around holy poverty induced the most cultured and refined women of Europe to strip themselves of all worldly possessions and to enter upon a life of the most rigid austerity, "which resulted," says Paschal Robinson, "in bringing about a restoration of discipline in the Church, and in morals and civilization in the peoples of Western Europe."

It was a zealous Dominican nun, St. Catherine of Sienna, who assisted the Church by her prayers and counsel when the clouds of error and schism began to lower over the Papal Throne in the fourteenth century. Through her visit to Pope Gregory she induced the Vicar of Christ to take up his residence in the Eternal City, and thus averted a schism of the dissatisfied Romans. Well might St. Catherine say, "The zeal of Thy house, O God, hath consumed me," for it was while laboring to extend obedience to the true Sovereign Pontiff, Urban VI, that her apostolic life came to a close.

"Hail valiant woman! Spain's proud boast,
Thou mother of a saintly line!"

In the sixteenth century, when a decrease of zeal prevailed even among those whom the world looked upon as models, God chose a humble Carmelite nun to lead souls to more lofty ideals. This was Teresa of Avila, the once brave girl of the Spanish Sierras, who, with crucifix in hand, set out to seek martyrdom in the land of the Moors. But God destined her to gain a more glorious crown by the long and painful martyrdom she was to undergo through her work of reform in the Order to which she belonged. The outcome of her mission was the establishment of the Discalced Carmelites, who have been of such service in the upbuilding of the Church through the example of their mortified lives, and through the power of their prayer, "which," says John Gilmary Shea, "contributes more certainly and effectively to the advantage of humanity and the welfare of the Church, than the blood-stained victories of the conqueror."

In considering the founders of religious congregations we are impressed at times with the thought of God's infinite wisdom, and are convinced of the truth of the words of the Lord, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are My ways your ways." The spiritual mother of that vast army of consecrated virgins, the Sisters of Charity, was Mother Seton, a convert to the Faith, a widow, and the mother of five children. To this noble woman God imparted the strength to sever the ties that bound her to her loved family and to seek the perfection of the religious state. And today the spirit of the saintly Foundress lives in her seven thousand spiritual daughters who are devoting their lives to the betterment of the world. Again we are forced to admire the inscrutable Providence of God which directed the young and gifted Cornelia Connelly into the haven of faith, and strengthened her soul to sacrifice the endearing charms of home where she reigned as queen in order to direct a community of religious women, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, in the practice of the evangelical counsels. Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, daughter of one of America's most gifted literary geniuses, and a convert to the Church from Unitarianism, answered the promptings of the Holy Spirit in the days of her widowhood by abandoning the pleasures of the world, and consecrated herself to the service of God in a religious community devoted to the most abject of suffering humanity.

While we admire the noble courage and magnanimity that enabled such as these to triumph over the world, we must not forget that it was the Divine Master who gave them inspiration and directed their efforts.

In the founding of the new Community in the diocese of Philadelphia, we have also evidences of God's special guiding Providence. As we have stated previously, one of the cherished objects of Right Reverend Bishop Neumann on his official visit to Rome was to secure the approbation of the Vicar of Christ on the proposed institute so that he might be assured that God would bless the undertaking. The first impetus given to the foundation was a letter from Reverend J. B. Hespelein, C. SS. R., Rector of St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia, who acquainted the Bishop of the fact that there was in the parish a pious widow who with two companions was desirous of consecrating herself to the service of God under the rule of St. Francis. In his interview with the Sovereign Pontiff, Bishop Neumann had expressed his desire to introduce into his diocese the Third Order of St. Dominic. But the intimation given in Father Hespelein's letter and the desire of the Holy Father, Pius IX, had indicated clearly that it was God's will that a Franciscan Community should be established in the diocese whose first bishop had been chosen from the Friars Minor.

The humble, saintly woman who was to have the distinction of being the foundress of the new Community was Mrs. Bachmann, formerly Anna Boll. She was born November 15, 1824, in Wenigstatt, Bavaria, a little village whose hum of industry bespoke the thrift of its sturdy inhabitants. Her parents, John and Magdalen Boll, were among the staunch Catholics whose ancestors had heroically withstood the dangerous heretical influences which had made havoc in many of the German Catholic communities. The union of this pious couple was blessed with six daughters, of whom Anna was the child of benediction, the future Mother Francis. Her father, we learn, had an unflinching fidelity to Faith, and possessed sterling qualities of mind and heart which won for him the high esteem of his fellow-townsmen. Anna, who was deeply attached to him, seems to have inherited many of his admirable traits of character. Her good mother, too, she could bless for the example given of noble, Christian womanhood.

At the family hearth she was schooled by her good parents in piety, and daily learned there the lessons which increased her love of God and of the Church which she was destined to serve so nobly.

In her tenth year, the first great shadow was cast over the hitherto happy home of her childhood, when she sustained the loss of her father. This sorrow had a potent influence in shaping her career, for she learned her first great lesson in the insecurity of earthly joys.

Endowed as she was with an attractive and gracious personality, a generous and lovable disposition, and a heart both sympathetic and kind, she won the admiration and affection of Anthony

Bachmann, a young Bavarian of sterling qualities to whom she was happily married in the twenty-second year of her age.

Life seemed to offer fair promises to this devoted couple. And although happiness reigned in the little home of their native village, in order to increase their worldly store and to share in the blessed freedom offered on the friendly shores of America, we find them one year after their marriage, joining the long line of emigrants whose despotic home government had lessened their attachment to the land of their forefathers.

To the city where Penn's hearty words of welcome seemed still to echo, the young Bachmann couple journeyed, and soon were pleasantly located in St. Peter's parish, where, fortunately, a large number of Germans had preceded them.

Glowing accounts of their kindly reception in the land of their adoption were sent back to the homeland from time to time, which awakened in their kinsmen a like desire to enjoy the blessings of liberty offered in the New World. Scarcely had a year passed when Mrs. Bachmann's widowed mother, together with her three youngest daughters, braved the difficulties of the long journey across the waters and the sorrow of separation from home ties, to share in the peace and plenty which they were promised would be theirs in the great city.

The arrival of the Boll family was the scene of a happy reunion; and the numerous German neighbors with whom they could converse in their mother-tongue, served to make their new surroundings more agreeable, and to compensate for the loss of the loved associations of their native land.

For four years Anthony Bachmann and his amiable wife were gathering around them those comforts which health and industry made possible, and were attentively providing for the future welfare of their household. Four dear little ones God had sent to brighten their home,—Frederick, Johanna, Cunigunda, and another little son, Aloysius, the blessed one of the flock, as we shall afterwards learn. The young couple were still in the springtime of life, and all seemed bright and beautiful, when lo! silently and with scarcely a moment's warning of his approach, the Angel of Death, who "ever draws down the curtain upon the brightest scenes of earthly life," came to claim the devoted husband and father, and the happy home of such fair promise was made desolate.

The shadows of sorrow had fallen again on the life of Anna Boll. Deprived as she was of the strong support of her chosen life-companion, and with the duty confronting her of providing for her little ones, she abandoned herself to the loving care of Divine Providence; and we may believe that in the anguish of her soul, she could well have voiced the trustful words:

> "Himself hath done it! Then I fain would say
> 'Thy will in all things evermore be done!' "

God never forsakes those who put their trust in Him. His merciful designs in regard to the soul which He had marked for His service were now manifest in a marked degree. The arrival of Mrs. Boll and her daughters was the controlling factor that provided a solution of the difficulty which presented itself to Mrs. Bachmann when she was forced to earn a livelihood for her family. Two of the daughters, Cunigunda and Louisa, had married, leaving Barbara, the older sister, to care for their mother whose health steadily declined after her departure from the scenes of her homeland. Barbara, whose occupation as seamstress necessitated her absence from home during the day, was unable to attend to the invalid mother, and prudently suggested removal to the Bachmann home where she might assist in the care of her sister's fatherless children and at the same time continue her work. This plan proved to be a very satisfactory one, as both daughters were permitted to have the wise counsels of their good mother, and to share lovingly the duty of caring for her in her declining days.

Scarcely had time begun to heal the wounds which Death had inflicted upon the heart of Mrs. Bachmann, when she was again visited by the Grim Messenger, who carried away from her peaceful home this time its brightest jewel, her good mother, who had been her consoling angel in the dark days of her widowhood. One by one the most endearing ties of human affection were being severed; but while her soul was being purified in the furnace of affliction, she preserved that calm resignation which could say,

> "Not one unneeded sorrow will He send
> To teach this wayward heart no more to roam."

While attending to her ordinary duties as the busy Martha, Mrs. Bachmann did not neglect the welfare of her soul, and sought to emulate the contemplative Mary by silent communings with God, which prepared her to receive the numerous graces needed in her future life.

Her sister Barbara, who resembled her in taste and disposition, now that she was relieved of the anxiety which her mother's illness had caused, began to speak freely with her sister about the future. God, she believed, was calling her to a higher life, to a consecration of herself by the vows of religion. By nature she was pious and charitable and had been a dutiful daughter; and amid the cares of her daily vocation had, like her sister, found time for prayer and meditation, which awakened in her soul an ever increasing desire for leading a spiritual life. In her perplexity about the future, she consulted her spiritual guide, Father Hespelein, who, from the first, recognized the Divine call in the earnest, candid soul who sought his advice. He counselled her to apply for admission to the Sisters of Notre Dame. She, however, feeling no attraction to that Order, and believing that she was morally bound to assist in the care of her sister's children, at last sought and obtained the permission to remain at home and follow the life of a religious, as many of the saints had done.

For the present this seemed to be God's will, and she entered upon the new mode of life with great fervor. As those who desire to consecrate themselves to God instinctively seek to renounce self will, so Barbara Boll, with the sanction of her director, generously sought to offer this most pleasing sacrifice by rendering obedience to her sister whom she regarded as her Superior.

Mrs. Bachmann sincerely approved of the pious desires of her sister, and longed for an opportunity to consecrate herself likewise unreservedly to God. Her first duty, however, she recognized was to provide for the maintenance and education of her children. This was by no means an easy task; for although young, she was by nature frail; and grief and anxiety had not improved her inherent weakness. But with God all things are possible; and, as we shall see, the events of the preceding years had been but as a preparation for the assuming of greater responsibilities and cares. As we view them now through the mist of years, each circumstance seems but as a messenger beckoning on to the realization of the more perfect things of a higher life. As there is in the little acorn, "the premonition of the oak, strong and sturdy, which will withstand the storms and defy the winds," so in the soul of Mrs. Bachmann there were discerned by her spiritual guides the latent powers which would make possible the accomplishing of great things for God and the Church. There was needed but the word from those whom Christ had commissioned as His representatives. And it was the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Peter's Church, especially the saintly Father Hespelein, whom God directed to speak this word.

As a beginning of their charitable enterprise, it was suggested that Mrs. Bachmann and her sister make provisions for safeguarding young working girls by offering them a home until suitable employment was secured, or give encouragement to them to remain and enter upon the duties of the religious life, which they themselves had undertaken. Both agreed to the proposition; and they soon found applicants who desired to avail themselves of the protection that was assured in their safe retreat. Every effort was made to make the home atmosphere attractive, and at the same time religious. All were to observe the daily routine in regard to rising and retiring, as well as to share the duties of the household and to learn how to keep themselves usefully occupied. Special times for prayer and spiritual reading were also set aside in which all were likewise to participate.

But none of those who enjoyed the protection of the Home showed any inclination to offer themselves for the service of God and His poor. The undertaking of Mrs. Bachmann and her sister was a new venture and its continuance was regarded as very doubtful, as the organization had no visible means of support. To maintain the Home the two sisters must rely on the alms of their charitable neighbors; for their work was among the poor, and no compensation could be relied on from those whom they befriended. The enterprise was, indeed, a laudable one in the great city where so many snares were laid for innocent, young, foreign girls. Only the Recording Angel will ever be able to tell of the good accomplished by these first efforts to win for the Good Shepherd the souls that otherwise might have strayed from the fold. Although the work at times seemed fruitless, when ingratitude was the only compensation received for their efforts, the noble women continued their tasks content in the thought that they were doing the Master's bidding, and that He in His own time would provide a recompense. The little seeds, sown as indeed they appeared to be at times on fruitless ground, have developed into the great enterprises for which today the Community may well bless its saintly founders.

Almost three years passed, and none of those who had enjoyed the hospitality of the Bachmann sisters expressed a desire to become their associates in their charitable work. The first aspirant was to come from abroad, from their own native land across the seas. This young woman, whom God inspired to leave her peaceful, little home in the Bavarian village of Gasseldorf for the distant mission in America, was Miss Anna Dorn, a noble character who was destined to give a new impetus to the religious Institute. Although but twenty years of age, she was a fervent Tertiary of St. Francis and enthusiastic in her commendation of the simple rule to the observance of which were attached so many spiritual advantages. After entering the Community in the Bachmann home early in the year 1855, she easily persuaded her two companions that it would be most commendable to have a definite organization and to enroll themselves also under the standard of the Seraphic Saint. In order to ascertain the will of God, Mrs. Bachmann, ever a humble daughter of the Church, submitted the proposition to her spiritual guide, Father Hespelein, who heartily endorsed the suggestion with the reservation, however, that there seemed to be no immediate possibility of carrying it into execution as there were no priests in the diocese who had the faculties for admitting persons to the Third Order. This difficulty was soon adjusted by the letter which Father Hespelein had written to the Right Reverend Bishop who was still in Rome, in which he described the mode of life of the three pious women and acquainted him with their desire of adopting the rule of St. Francis. This was a happy coincidence, we may say as we read the lines. Already the Holy Father had given his sanction for the foundation under the rule of St. Francis; and now the good Bishop learns that in his absence affairs were transpiring at home of which he was unaware and which were to make possible the new Franciscan Community.

Without delay, he instructed Father Hespelein to continue his direction of the three aspirants, and to acquaint them with the duties they were to assume in the observance of the rule they were to adopt. In order to secure the jurisdiction to invest and profess members into the Third Order, he sought an interview with the Franciscan General in Rome, who readily granted the permission to extend the work of his holy Founder to the fair land which had been first blessed by the devoted followers of the Seraphic Saint.

In considering events that had transpired, how truly could the venerable Bishop have exclaimed with the Royal Prophet, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Surely he might have given expression still to his confidence in the loving guidance of Divine Providence in the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles, "To those who love God, all things work together unto good."

Now and again, we catch glimpses of the unfolding of the Divine plan in the formation of the Community which had already the marks of God's sanction in its lowly origin—the first characteristic of all the works which are to have His approval. With the impress of the cross—trials and hardships which menaced every endeavor—it was evident that God was pleased with the labors of His servants and was blessing the new foundation.

Although Mrs. Bachmann was the acknowledged leader of the little missionary band, it was by no means in accordance with the spirit of her humility to assume any honor other than to be the least among them. Step by step she had been led on by her director without ever being able to look beyond and discern her way clearly for the future; but with her characteristic trust she took no thought for the morrow, in the same spirit as the saintly Cardinal Newman whose words,

"So long Thy power hast kept me
Sure it still will lead me on,"

have given courage to many a soul faltering along the great highway of life.

In speaking of the strange vocation of Mrs. Bachmann, we may repeat what the Bishop of Saint-Pons said of the noble Maria Orsini under similar circumstances. "One may wonder today," says the prelate, "that God permitted her to enter the marriage state, were it not that He wished to give women of the world this great model of chaste and admirable earthly affection. And therefore is it, that God has taken His servant from the world, that He may be loved, with that unique and holy love, that in His supreme law He exacts of us."

In the sacrifice which God required of His servant, there remains still to be recorded what seems almost a tragic scene,—the severing of those ties which are most sacred to a fond mother's heart, the ties by which natural, maternal instinct bound her to her cherished little ones, each of whom called loudly for her heart's first affection. Humanly speaking, her life's work lay before her in rearing those whom God had entrusted to her keeping, the fair children of whom she might truly have said with the noble Roman mother, "Behold, these are my jewels." But strong as were the pleadings of natural affection, above all rose the call of God to leave home and children to be a mother to the world around her,—the poor, the sick, the needy whose misery clamored more loudly for her fostering care than did the pleadings of her own little brood.

Surely those of faith cannot but admire in this noble woman the virtues of a Christian heroine, who, like the martyrs, for the love of God triumphed over that which life holds most dear, and obeyed literally the command of the Savior: "If any man come to Me and hate not his father, mother, and wife and *children* . . . he cannot be My disciple."

Into Mrs. Bachmann's family circle the Reaper had already entered and gathered one of the choicest flowers, the dear little Frederick, yet in the sweet innocence of childhood. That careful provision was made for the remaining children, the history of their lives will reveal. Johanna remained with her mother; and when the canonical age arrived she became a member of the Society under the name of Sister Robertina. The younger children were entrusted to the care of Mrs. Bielefeld, their mother's sister. Cunigunda, the youngest of the family, became Sister Mary Francis of the Franciscan Community which was established in Buffalo. Aloysius, whom God had destined for the service of the altar in the Seraphic Order, edified the Society by more than fifty golden years of service; and at the time of his death was pastor of St. Francis Church in Tonawanda, New York.

Could the good mother of the Bachmann family, whose renunciation of the care of her children had cost her so dearly, in later years have beheld the fruits of her sacrifice, she might have said to the good Lord who had been so liberal in His rewards, "Greater is Thy care of me than all the care I can take of myself."

Of the numerous pressing duties that awaited the return of the long absent Shepherd of the diocese of Philadelphia, none was considered more urgent than the investing of the pious trio who were to form the nucleus of the new Community. In the meantime, Father Hespelein had been untiring in his efforts to have all in readiness as soon as possible; and on April 9, 1855, in St. Peter's Church the postulants were clothed in the brown habit of St. Francis and made the first public declaration of their intention of following in the footsteps of the lowly Saint of Umbria.

To Mrs. Bachmann was given the name Sister Mary Francis. She was well deserving of the name as she was appointed superior of the little band and emulated the Poor Man of Assisi in the observance of the evangelical counsels. Barbara Boll became Sister Mary Margaret, and Miss Dorn was henceforth known as Sister Mary Bernardine.

In May of the following year, the fervent novices had the blessed privilege of consecrating themselves more completely to God's service by the vows of religion. The ceremony which took place in the Bishop's private chapel, now a reception room in the Cathedral residence, was a simple one, but one which was to have glorious results, as it marked a definite period in the history of the Community which was then placed before the world with the seal of ecclesiastical authority.

Considered from a worldly viewpoint, there was nothing in the new Society that guaranteed its permanency or success. Its foundation had been laid in the greatest poverty. The members had brought with them no dowry greater than that which the Apostles had offered to the Lord when He called them to leave their boats and nets on the shores of Galilee. As the poor have few friends, there were no persons of influence to whom they could look for support or encouragement. As yet they were strangers in a strange land with whose language their stay of short duration had not familiarized them. There were other flourishing Orders around them which had become well established and whose work was commended, and when compared with these, the little Community seemed like a tender sapling standing beside the giant trees of a forest. Such circumstances, adverse as they may seem, were in reality only blessings in disguise, as they fostered a spirit of humility and poverty, which should ever be cherished by those who follow the standard of the Stigmatized Saint of Alverna.

PART IV

Pioneer Days

CHAPTER

1. First Activities of the Order
2. Initial Work in Education
3. Establishment of the Mother House and Novitiate
4. Timely Recruits
5. A Season of Adversity
6. The First Benevolent Institution
7. Last Days of Mother Francis

CHAPTER 1

First Activities of the Order

"Set me the lowliest task Thou hast
Let me repentant work for Thee."

HAVING broken every bond that could attach them to the world, the three consecrated Daughters of St. Francis now entered upon a life of renewed fervor in the performance of the humble tasks incumbent upon them in the service of the poor working girls who still sought the protection of their proffered home.

No variation was made in the daily routine; no outward observances were added to those which were already in practice; neither were any new activities suggested to them, eager as they were to enter upon more extended missionary labors. The saintly Bishop Neumann, knowing full well that humility is the guardian of all other virtues, wished that his spiritual children should learn well this lesson which their holy Founder had so earnestly recommended to all his disciples. The acquisition of this virtue would insure that the new spiritual edifice would withstand all storms, like the house of the wise man of which it is said, "The rains came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell not, for it was built upon a rock."

Within the year 1856, new life was infused into the Community by the profession of three members, Sisters Antonia, Clara, and Elizabeth. Thus, not only was their number doubled, but also an increase in their sphere of usefulness was made possible.

Hitherto the infant Community had been under the immediate direction of Father Hespelein and had followed only the verbal regulations made by their saintly director.

The Right Reverend Bishop now deemed the time opportune for giving the Community a set of written rules for their more secure guidance, and proceeded himself to draw up a plan which he believed would be consistent with their mode of life, and would insure greater regularity and fervor in the performance of their religious duties. For this task no one could have been more competent than the good Bishop; for he was not only versed in canon law, but had also practised heroically the virtues of the religious life.

That these rules were wisely conceived as a result of earnest prayer and mature reflection, is manifest from the fact that they have stood the test of time and have been cherished by eminently saintly souls who have owed their increase in virtue to the observance of these simple precepts, which, like those of St. Francis, are only modifications of those taught by the Savior Himself.

The original copy of this set of rules is preserved in the archives of the Community, and is regarded as a precious legacy bequeathed by the saintly Bishop whose heroic virtues have already been recognized by the Holy See.

The essentials of this rule, which was drawn up for the pioneer members of the Society, were the same as those which the Community now observe. With only a few modifications, which the exigencies of the times demanded, the original horarium is still adhered to; and this fact again bespeaks the broad vision of the good Bishop who at all times made wise provisions for the future.

With sincere paternal solicitude, the Right Reverend Bishop interested himself in the material and spiritual welfare of the Community. In order to make the best possible use of the valuable services of his zealous co-laborers, he counselled Mother Francis to discontinue the home for working girls and took into consideration the building of a convent near the diocesan seminary which was then located at the corner of 18th and Race Streets. In time it could serve also as a mother house and novitiate for the growing Community.

Two motives urged the Bishop to desire that the Sisters should remove to that part of the city: not only could they be employed in the domestic work of the seminary, but could also teach the children of the few scattered families in that vicinity.

Evidently it was not in accordance with God's will that the Community should engage in this line of work, for the plans of the Right Reverend Bishop did not materialize. Thus was proved the truth of the words: "Man proposes, but God disposes."

The new convent was to have been ready for occupancy by August, 1856; but an unforeseen circumstance prevented the completion of the work, and the project had to be abandoned. It was with sincere regret that Bishop Neumann was obliged to acquaint Mother Francis with this fact, just as the Community had all in readiness to move to their new home. It was an embarrassing situation, for already the house which they had been occupying had been rented to others; therefore, it necessitated removal elsewhere immediately.

With no money and no income nor occupation which would insure the payment of rent for a larger house, Mother Francis, confiding in the unfailing assistance of Divine Providence to bless her efforts, sought and obtained a suitable house on Apple Street, (Lawrence above Jefferson) which she rented at fifteen dollars a month.

Preparations for the removal were soon completed, for these first poor Daughters of St. Francis, who gloried in observing the poverty of the primitive Order, had very few worldly possessions to transport.

With mingled feelings of joy and sadness, the little Community departed from the old Bachmann home, the cradle of the infant Order, which held within its walls memories of those decisive events in the life of Mother Francis that were to determine the great work for which she had been destined. May we not believe that these many scenes passed in review before her mind, one by one, as the final day came for the leave-taking, and that as she passed forever from all that could remind her of her former self, her heart poured forth fervent prayers in thanksgiving for all God's wondrous mercy?

Soon the Sisters were diligently pursuing their tasks in their new home, which had been blessed on the Feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis and placed under the patronage of St. Clara. Happily had the Princess of Poverty been chosen as the guardian of this first convent where circumstances demanded that the Sisters endure great privations in the exercise of the humble functions of the Community. Surely St. Clara in her "hillside enclosure" at San Damiano was no more solicitous to keep intact her cherished vow of poverty than these enthusiastic followers of the Poor Man of Assisi in their little convent in the heart of the great city of Philadelphia.

Within one year, two new aspirants had sought admission to their number. Louisa Boll, edified by the sacrifice of her good sister, Mother Francis, wished to share in her pious labors and was received into the Community under the name of Sister Johanna. The second member to offer her services had come from a far-away Alpine village in Switzerland, and was known as Sister Bridget.

There were now in 1857 eight professed Sisters, all fervent in their desires for evangelical perfection, and vying with one another in the practice of those virtues which would bring down the blessing of God upon their efforts.

Even in those far-off days, when the world was beginning to feel that penance was no longer necessary for salvation, these Christian women practised austerities which today would seem quite inconsistent with laborious life. On Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, they not only abstained, but fasted as well. From the feast of St. Martin the fast was begun in preparation for Christmas. While others began the Lenten fast on Ash Wednesday, these added the three previous days and included all Sundays. Not only meat, but also cheese and eggs were forbidden during the penitential seasons. For persons who are accustomed to have an appetizing, hot breakfast served before beginning their day's labor, it will seem quite incredible that this austere Community of women, whose daily labors necessitated the expenditure of bodily strength, did not have their first meal until midday. Such, however, was the case, and we may believe that though "outwardly they suffered want, within they were refreshed with grace and divine consolation."

"Spiritual things are spiritually discerned;" hence, the worldly-minded cannot understand that among these souls hungering for sacrifice and immolation, there reigned a joyousness seldom found outside the cloister. And how truly proper it was that mirth should abound among the Daughters of the Sweet Saint of Umbria who, so gleeful and joyous both in the sunshine and in the shadows, sang of the beauty and delight of God's service.

Since the home for working girls had been discontinued, and the plans for other labors had been frustrated, our readers may ask what disposition the Right Reverend Bishop had made of those who were to be his co-laborers, after their removal to St. Clara's Convent. We may answer the query by saying that Bishop Neumann was too far advanced in the science of the saints to believe that his spiritual daughters had yet learned sufficiently well their first lessons in humility; therefore, he assigned to them no special duties in the diocese.

The good Redemptorist Fathers, however, found sufficient time to occupy the attention of the charitable Community by engaging them to care for the sick and the poor in the parish whose needs they themselves were unable to relieve.

Thus began the praiseworthy work of mercy of visiting the sick in their homes and of performing the office of the Good Samaritan, not only by assisting them in their corporal infirmities, but also by rendering valuable spiritual assistance in counselling the suffering to bear the ills of life patiently, and in effecting a return to the Faith of those who had wandered from the Fold.

To the hovels of the poor, these good Sisters might be seen making their way day after day, carrying with them both provisions and clothing. They gave their entire services, performing the menial tasks of preparing food and remedies for their charges—and all with that sweet and gracious courtesy which St. Francis recommended, in order that their beneficiaries might not feel any embarrassment in accepting their services.

Who would ever be able to estimate the value of these silent little deeds of charity rendered to the dear friends of Christ who ever considers what is done to the poor as done unto Himself, as we may learn from His own words: "I was sick and you visited Me . . . I was hungry and you gave Me to eat?" Blessed words indeed are these of the humble Savior of mankind who manifested His power by going about doing good; and who, to condemn the spirit of the world that judges a man's worth by his wealth, led a life of poverty among the poor whose woes He ever most tenderly compassionated.

The Sisters of St. Clara's Convent had been counselled to observe the strictest poverty. They still had no means of support other than the voluntary alms offered by their charitable neighbors, both for their own maintenance and for those to whom they gave assistance. When this was insufficient to supply the necessaries of life, or when some urgent case of charity demanded, they did not hesitate to ask for assistance, going from door to door, soliciting money, food, and clothing in the name of the Lord, gratefully accepting what was offered and patiently bearing refusal and reproach.

As frequently happens among those who endeavor to live in absolute poverty, dependent solely on the alms of the faithful, God permitted that the Sisters should occasionally come to the verge of dire want, when they were forced to cry out with the Apostle, "Lord, save us or we perish!"

Returning to their convent after a fatiguing day's labor in the cheerless home of some poor sufferer, it was not an infrequent occurrence to have no fire to warm them and food insufficient to satisfy their hunger.

Perhaps at such times as these they recalled the memory of St. Francis and his disciples returning at the close of day to Rivo Torto where they partook of their frugal meal of crusts, while the rain poured in upon them through the roof of the old dilapidated shed.

On the foundation of poverty which meant privations and suffering, the great Order of the Friars Minor had been built, and upon the same foundation Mother Francis, aglow with the ideals of Franciscan poverty, meant to build the Institute to which she had been assigned the superiorship, as we learn from her own words: "My dear Sisters, let Holy Poverty be your treasure, not only poverty of body, but poverty of spirit. It is the foundation of the Order."

Of Mother Francis we have no record that she ever wavered in her confidence in the goodness of Divine Providence, or doubted the mission which had been entrusted to her through the direction of her spiritual guides; although there were certainly occasions when forced to endure both cold and hunger, when even the stoutest heart might have faltered and asked: "Is it the will of God that I should submit to this?"

In one of these distressing moments when the Community was put to the limit of endurance, Bishop Neumann happened to make a friendly visit to the Sisters and learned of their need through a Sister who in her simple faith candidly remarked: "Right Reverend Bishop, we can scarcely get along. Sometimes we have no coal to make a fire; and when we have coal, we often have nothing to cook." To his informant the good Bishop might have addressed the words directed to the Apostles, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" But touched with compassion, and wishing at the same time to teach this poor Daughter of St. Francis a lesson in resignation, he thoughtfully pointed to the crucifix, saying: "There, dear Sister, is a book. Read it; meditate upon it. It will lighten your trials; it will help you to bear your cross."

But the appeal of the good Sister made in the spirit of her who at Cana of Galilee had only to remark to the Divine Guest, "They have no wine," was, like that of Mary, not left unheeded; for the good Bishop, who ever interested himself in the material welfare of the Community, probably was aware beforehand of the needs of his spiritual children, and had come prepared to render needed assistance. After giving the Sisters a little exercise in patience, he turned to Mother Francis and said with a smile of benevolence: "As I usually distribute medals among the Sisters, I must not omit to do so now; but today, I am going to give you Yankee medals;" and he handed her fifty dollars in gold to procure necessaries for the house.

In speaking of the incident, one of the Sisters remarked that his tone of voice when pointing to the crucifix and his whole manner made a deep impression on them and gave them new courage and strength to bear their trials with greater patience.

Bishop Neumann in his instructions to the Community had said: "I wish your house to be a model of religious observance. I am not solicitous about its temporalities. Divine Providence will see that you always have what is necessary, if the Sisters always faithfully observe their rule and by their love and harmony attract His blessing upon themselves."

Under the able direction of Mother Francis who had interpreted literally the words, "Cast all your care upon the Lord," the Community prospered, not in a material way, however, as there were few applicants who came to share their labors; nor much less financially, for there was no thought of breaking faith with the dear Lady Poverty, and of having the modern conveniences which were employed by those who made a profession of being "social workers." The prosperity of which we speak was an ever increasing demand for the services of the Sisters among the sick, who, the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Peter's Church learned, often returned to the Faith after years of estrangement from God, or were brought into the Church by the beautiful example of the self-sacrifice displayed by the members of the Community in their kind ministrations. Among the Sisters there were no professionally trained nurses, although they were very proficient in the work of caring for the sick. A sweet, Christ-like charity and a tender sympathy accompanied the labor of relieving the bodily sufferings of their patients, like that of St. Francis and his devoted brethren at San Maddelena; and this could be acquired only in the School of Jesus Crucified.

CHAPTER 2

Initial Work in Education

"Only the Church bell and the school bell can prolong the echoes of the 'Liberty Bell.'"

HAVING proved itself worthy of the greater things promised to those who are faithful to that which is least, the Society entered upon a new era in which was inaugurated the great spiritual work of mercy, that of instructing youth in parochial schools,—a work which has become a vital part of the activities of the Community and which, it may truly be said, is the crowning glory of its diamond years.

"Noble indeed," says St. John Chrysostom, "is the profession of the painter and the sculptor, who make the canvas breathe and the marble glow with instinct of life, yet nobler far is the work of him who forms the soul and the character of youth, and who moulds and fashions them to the lineaments of Christian virtue."

Assured of the fact that "who possesses the youth, is master of the future," the Church has ever wisely provided sane methods of education, which teach the child its true destiny and the safest means to attain it. Wherever she has planted the Cross, there also has she erected the school and secured Christian teachers who, aware of the rocks and shoals where so many make shipwreck of Faith, have held aloft the torch of true knowledge to guide the frail bark of youth safely into harbor.

In the words of Judge O'Brien, "We may rightly view youth as the seedtime of life. If the ground is then well tilled and watered and sown with good seed, the perennial flowers of religion and virtue will bloom in the summer's sun, and their sweetness and perfume continue until winter's snow shall linger and be dissolved in the lap of eternal spring."

No better provision for education has been made by the Church in America than in the diocese of Philadelphia where, it is safe to say, there exists today one of the best organized parochial school systems of the world. Colonial conditions may in some measure have favored this, as there was up to the year 1834 no appreciable movement made for public control of elementary schools. Up to this time, education was largely left to the various religious denominations which had found refuge among the tolerant Quakers. Under these conditions, the scattered Catholic communities enjoyed the liberty also of establishing their own schools, but not till after the middle of the nineteenth century was any notable progress made.

It was the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann who was to make the first remarkable advance in education by awakening an intense interest in the building of parochial schools and in providing efficient teachers for instructing the youth in his vast diocese. This saintly Prelate had well in mind the value of Christian education; and, aware of the fact that the boys and girls of today are the men and women of tomorrow, he made all possible efforts to provide means of training them to become citizens worthy of the great country which so zealously guarded their every interest.

Doubtless, when considering the formation of the religious Community which was organized under his authority, he had in mind that they should one day engage in the task of teaching. Circumstances thus far had not favored the undertaking of that work, as there had been no notable increase in the number of members. Notwithstanding, early in the year 1857, the time seemed opportune for suggesting to the Sisters, at least indirectly, the work of teaching, although the Right Reverend Bishop does not seem to have fully realized the possibility of carrying out the plans he had in mind, and said nothing definite about the subject. The only intimation he gave the Community was the donation of several packages of books which he handed Mother Francis and her companion as they were leaving the episcopal residence whither they had gone to discuss affairs relative to the Order. These, they believed, were ascetical works and would be very acceptable, for their spiritual reading was limited to a few well-worn volumes, to which their poverty prevented their making any addition. On reaching home, what was their astonishment to find on opening the packages, not the supposed ascetical works, but elementary textbooks,—catechisms, readers, Bible histories, and other books used in schools!

We can well imagine that at first no little excitement prevailed among the Sisters whose ordinary occupations were of such a nature as to cause little variation in the even tenor of their lives. They had already become quite accustomed to their lowly tasks, and were certainly not dreaming of great things to do by and by. For a time the mystery of the textbooks remained unsolved, and the Community quietly waited for further manifestation of God's holy will.

From the beginning, Bishop Neumann thought it advisable to place the Sisters under the direction of the Franciscan Fathers and decided to invite the Minor Conventuals into the diocese. Through their influence, he believed, they would more surely acquire the virtues recommended by their holy Founder, and would be more solicitous to keep intact the spirit of the Institute. In order to carry out his plan, the Right Reverend Bishop secured the services of Reverend Bonaventure Keller, O.M.C., whom he placed in charge of St. Alphonsus Church. At the same time he appointed him confessor and spiritual director of the Community in place of Reverend Father Hespelein. Although the Sisters recognized in the change the will of God, it was not without regret that they learned they were no longer to be under the direction of the saintly Redemptorist who had sustained their courage in many a trying hour of those primitive times, when, like the first Franciscan apostles, "their spiritual feet were not sure of the hard ground they trod."

The transfer of the Community to the direction of the Minor Conventuals was to have far-reaching consequences, not as yet divined, perhaps, even by the good Bishop who had made the provision. It was one of those decisive events, apparently insignificant, which God permitted wisely to shape affairs in such a way as to determine the future usefulness of the Community so unpretentiously and unassumingly pursuing their mission among the poor.

God never works precipitately; never in haste. Order is His first law. Little by little His plans are unfolded and with man's co-operation finally assume definite proportions, even as the little folded bud gradually opens its shining petals in the genial glow of the sun's warm rays.

No sooner had the Reverend Father Keller entered upon his duties at St. Alphonsus Church, than he realized the necessity of a parish school, and straightway sought and obtained permission of the Right Reverend Bishop to secure the services of his new spiritual daughters in the work of teaching.

Needless to say, this was an unexpected task, and one for which Mother Francis and the Community had made no preparation. It was such an undertaking as worldly prudence would have caused her to decline. But with her characteristic submission to her spiritual superiors, she cheerfully accepted what seemed to be unmistakably the will of God. Now the question about the elementary textbooks was solved. They were no idle gift. Those few books, unwelcome, disappointing, and mysterious as they surely must have been, were but a presage of the future work of the Order in education, which in its scope has surpassed every other activity.

As St. Clara's Convent was at a considerable distance from St. Alphonsus Church, it was necessary to secure, somewhere in the vicinity of the school, a dwelling for those who were to teach. After some difficulty a small house on Reed Street, above Fourth, was rented. Mother Francis and two Sisters moved thither to enter upon their new duties in the fall of 1858, leaving Sister Bernardine in charge of St. Clara's Convent.

Before assuming their duties as teachers, the Sisters were advised to adopt a religious garb. Although they had received at their reception into the Order the brown woolen habit worn by Tertiaries, they did not ordinarily wear this. Hitherto they had worn a plain black dress; for street wear, they added a shawl, bonnet and veil which were all of black. Acting on the advice of Father Bonaventure, the Community chose a black serge dress. Around their waist they wore a white cord in which there were three knots. To this cincture was attached a five-decade rosary. A cap, forehead band, and collar, all of white linen, and a black veil completed the garb. With the exception of the rosary, which was eventually replaced by the rosary of the Seven Joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the habit was the same as that worn at the present day.

Dire poverty was again to be endured in the new field of labor. The parishioners were unable to contribute sufficient for the support of the Sisters, and they were forced to rely on the generosity of a few of their old friends to secure even the necessaries of life.

These pioneer teachers had certainly received no preparatory training. Those were not the days when a knowledge of "methods" was demanded as a requisite for successful teaching. Normal schools were but in their infancy and only the favored few were able to avail themselves of the privilege of attendance. When we measure the success of the Sisters' endeavors by the difficulties they had to surmount to insure the permanency of their work, we must needs marvel at their constancy in supporting the severe trials which to many a modern teacher would be unbearable. Should we have asked these brave pioneers in education whence they received the light and strength to pursue their arduous tasks, we should undoubtedly have learned that they had the same Master as the Seraphic Doctor, St. Bonaventure, who on being asked whence he acquired his amazing knowledge pointed in silence to the crucifix.

We must remember that in Catholic teaching the accumulation of knowledge alone is deemed insufficient. If there is no parallel moral training, which leads to correct principles of thought and action, education is a failure. In order to secure the proper balance, these pioneer Sisters at St. Alphonsus' gave due attention to the religious element in their teaching. That "it profits a man nothing to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul," was a lesson which these lowly followers of St. Francis endeavored to impress upon the minds of their children. The lesson was certainly well learned if we may judge from the fact that these first pupils of St. Alphonsus School were the pillars of the Church at a later time. Today only a scattered few remain. One may occasionally see them accompanied by their children's children wending their way with trembling steps to the old church, the venerable sanctuary wherein they received from the first the Bread of Life which has preserved their souls' vitality. Here was their spiritual nursery. Here, too, will they lay down the burden of life and rest in peace near their dear ones of the household of Faith.

Full well did the Sisters realize that theirs was the task of cultivating the soil and of planting the seeds in the field of education. To others they left the joy of reaping the harvest, made golden indeed by the faithful and generous co-operation of the zealous pastors of St. Alphonsus Church, none of whom deserves greater commendation than the saintly Father Stommel. For more than a quarter of a century this worthy priest gave every encouragement to the Sisters in the task of forming to the image of God the little ones of the flock, so dear to the heart of Christ, and became the firm friend and counsellor of the Community who hold his memory in grateful benediction.

To the saintly pioneer teachers of St. Alphonsus School, the Sisters of St. Francis may indeed look back with grateful admiration. They can find inspiration in recalling their devotedness. They must marvel at their courage in enduring great privations and at their success in spite of the very limited resources at their command. As a result of these humble beginnings in education in St. Alphonsus parish, the Community at the present time conducts seventy-one flourishing schools in which thousands of children are being taught all that is conducive to their well-being in time and eternity.

ST. FRANCIS CONVENT
Philadelphia, Pa.

ST. ALPHONSUS CHURCH AND SCHOOL
Philadelphia, Pa.

CHAPTER 3

Establishment of the Mother House and Novitiate

"O small beginnings, ye are great and strong; ye build the future fair."

JUDGING from outward appearances, the Community in the year 1858 still gave no evidence of material prosperity. To the small number of members only two additions were made; namely, Sisters Rose and Angela. Several other young women had ventured to seek admission, but disheartened by the prospects of enduring only privations and hardships, they returned to their homes after a few days' trial, unable to "taste the sweets of the Lord" in abnegation. With the withdrawal of those who had not sufficient spiritual strength to bear the Cross of the Lord courageously, there was left a valiant band who, united in heart and soul, were capable of enduring all things for the sake of Christ and of building up a spiritual edifice worthy of the patronage of the Saint of the Crucified.

With no other prospect than that of continuing the work in which they were then engaged, and with no other resources than the alms which they daily solicited from their charitably disposed friends, Mother Francis proposed that the Community should secure a mother house and novitiate.

Again we may say that the humanly wise might well have questioned the advisability of such a proposition, considering that there were no funds on hand with which to begin the erection of a building. While Mother Francis had exhibited remarkable executive ability, her actions were not always in accord with human prudence. Like the Apostle she could say indeed, "Gold and silver I have none." But with firm confidence she relied on the bounty of Divine Providence in the same spirit as the saintly Carmelite who silenced criticism about contracting a debt by her reply, "Teresa and a penny are nothing; but God, Teresa, and a penny suffice."

With the approbation of her ecclesiastical superiors, preparations were begun for the erection of a convent which would accommodate all the Sisters and which would be sufficiently large to admit others who might in the future apply for membership. A house and lot on Reed Street, above Fifth, were finally secured; and it was decided that a three story brick building should be added to the small house which had been purchased.

For the payment of the sum needed to meet the expense of the new building and grounds, Mother Francis relied again on the charity of those who, mindful of the words of the Lord of Hosts, "the gold is mine and the silver is mine," regarded themselves but as stewards set over their wealth. Her confidence, indeed, was not misplaced, nor were her days and nights consumed in anxiety over making ends meet. Confidently she hoped, and magnificently was she rewarded.

Upon the completion of the new home, the Sisters who taught at St. Alphonsus' removed thither, as did the novices and postulants from St. Clara's. The convent was blessed by Reverend Father Keller, and placed under the patronage of St. Francis. Again we must admire the prudence of the founders in choosing the holy Apostle of Poverty as the guardian of the foundation whence for so many years was to radiate the spirit of the Order. Within the sacred walls of the convent, the new members of the Order were schooled in the science of Franciscan sainthood before entering upon their respective duties on the missions. Here they learned the true spirit of poverty, of humility, and simplicity which St. Francis wished should be the distinctive marks of his children. In this poor, unadorned convent there were to be found nothing but the barest necessaries of life, for the most part bestowed as alms by gracious benefactors. Here silence reigned so profound that the striking of the clock, as it told off the hours, was often the only distraction to these eager aspirants for perfection, who almost spirit-like moved about the house intent upon their respective duties.

The same rigid austerity which was practised by the first members was continued down through the long course of years in St. Francis Novitiate. Although the Community now occupies a more commodious building, and modern conditions have necessitated some relaxation in the former severe discipline, in the true Franciscan Sister there is still to be found the same spirit that animated the saintly founders.

The superior of the new convent was Mother Francis. The Sisters were fortunate indeed, as there was need of her strong protecting influence to sustain the Community in the crucial days that followed; for scarcely had they become established in their new home, when the city of Philadelphia was visited by a terrible scourge of smallpox, and charity demanded that the Sisters sacrifice themselves for the relief of their suffering neighbor.

Fortunately, the experience which the Sisters had gained in their care of the sick was invaluable now in the midst of the wave of pestilence that threatened to sweep away the whole population. The atmosphere fairly reeked with disease. Its poisonous vapors spread themselves over the homes of both rich and poor. It was no respecter of persons. Both the strong and the weak struggled with the Grim Destroyer who caught whole families in his merciless grasp, and spread sorrow and destruction over the fair city which had been so generous in its solicitude for the happiness of others.

But every cloud has a silver lining. Into the midst of the plague-stricken went the little band of Franciscan Sisters to soothe the pains of the suffering and to comfort and assist the dying in their last struggle; and not infrequently were miracles of grace apparent in the return of those who had strayed from the fold. The services of the Sisters were not confined to nursing alone, but to the soliciting of food and clothing, for their mission lay for the most part among the destitute. If, as occasionally happened, they were not permitted to enter homes where poor servant girls lay stricken with the plague, they brought the patients into their own convent where they nursed them back to health, regardless of the danger of contagion.

In this work of attending the sick within their own convent walls, the foundation for another work was unconsciously laid, which, at a not far distant day, was to assume great proportions in administering to the ills of humanity in hospitals—a work in which the Community has signalized itself, not only in the erection of spacious institutions, but also in the efficiency of its service.

After the plague had spent itself, the city of Philadelphia had other problems to solve. It had to care for those who had been deprived of their bread-winners. While in some cases whole families were swept away, it was found, at times, that a hapless little infant survived or an aged mother or father, or some other dependent member of a family. For these, urgent charity demanded attention also.

Again, the Sisters of St. Francis offered their services by receiving into their convent a number of aged and feeble women who had no means of support. Thus again, unwittingly, was inaugurated another activity of the Community—that of caring for the poor in the helplessness of old age, when, through financial reverses or ill health, they find themselves destitute of the friends upon whom they relied in the days of prosperity, and are unable to stand alone in the stern struggle of life.

As an outcome of this work undertaken out of pure charity, the Community now conducts two magnificent institutions that are provided with all modern conveniences for securing for their aged charges the joy of living the few years that may yet remain of life's journey.

With the true spirit of St. Francis, which leaves no misery unalleviated, the Sisters found an opportunity to extend their usefulness by receiving into their convent from eight to ten orphan girls, for whom they provided through the charitable assistance of kind benefactors. As the home for working girls had been discontinued, this seemed to be the only means at their disposal for continuing their interest in the welfare of girls.

It was in the care of orphans, too, that the Sisters made their first venture outside their own convent when they assumed charge of St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Tacony, Pa., at the urgent request of Reverend Peter Carbon, pastor of Holy Trinity Church and president of the institution. Sweet as was the task of caring for these homeless little outcasts, the work was, from the beginning, beset with great difficulties. On account of its close proximity to the Delaware River, the house was at times flooded, and poor sanitation rendered it very damp and unhealthy; consequently, the children contracted many diseases which added to the task of the few Sisters in charge.

Besides these difficulties, the Sisters were deprived of their chaplain, and were forced to go a considerable distance to attend Mass. Those were not the days of rapid transit, and they had to rise at an early hour and depend on the charity of their neighbors to convey them in their cumbersome wagons to the distant church. Tacony of today does not bear any resemblance to the desolate little village of seventy years ago. The well paved roads of the present were then scarcely more than wretched trails made almost impassable by the long winter rains, and travel over them was very uncomfortable and uncertain. Under these conditions the return from Mass was often retarded till late in the day and work was greatly delayed. The Sisters were, however, very happy in the thought that they were doing God's will, and patiently accepted the portion of the cross which God willed they should bear. Finally, when Father Carbon was relieved of the presidency of the orphanage, and his successor showed no disposition to change unfavorable conditions, Mother Francis deemed it expedient to withdraw the Sisters from the mission. They returned to Philadelphia on the sixth of December. The joyous feast was in strange contrast with the elements, for that day a severe thunderstorm with the rain pouring down in torrents, broke upon the lonely travelers as they were returning from Tacony to the mother house. The weather seemed to be, indeed, in harmony with the situation and symbolic of the stormy days which had been passed at the mission. Not a little disheartened, we may believe, from the necessity of having to abandon their charges to whom contact of nearly a year had endeared them, the Sisters reached the mother house and received a hearty "welcome home" from their companions. As it was the feast of St. Nicholas, the Sisters, in keeping with the festive occasion, were permitted a relaxation from the ordinary severity of the penitential season, and all indulged in the innocent gayety which children enjoy on this joyous feast. Such recreations as these occasionally, strengthened the bond of union between the Sisters. United in joy, they were also united in sorrow; and thus were engendered the spirit of fidelity to one another and the spirit of charity which make a religious house a veritable paradise on earth.

From a viewpoint of permanency, the mission at Tacony had been a failure. But who will dare to call that unsuccessful which had been carried on with such display of heroism and self-sacrifice? The Sisters were withdrawn only when the situation was so distressing that prudence could not permit that they continue longer the work in which it was impossible for them to live up to their duties as religious. At times, a prudent general does not allow his troops to engage in battle with the enemy, eager as they may be to fight, as his wise foresight knows it would mean inglorious defeat. Even so, there are times when a religious superior must safeguard the vocation of her subjects by refusing to undertake or to continue tasks that are foreign to their calling.

The work apparently unsuccessful had certainly been a training school in the endurance of hardships hitherto not experienced by the Community. What it meant in the future conflict to those who were employed in more difficult tasks, can only be justly estimated by Him who permits that His servants shall at times be tried in the furnace of affliction that they may come forth purified from all worldly dross, and be prepared for the accomplishment of greater things for His glory.

When we view today the seven great institutions conducted by the Community in which over a thousand homeless little orphans are harbored, may we not believe that those who "went and wept casting their seed" may indeed "return with joyfulness carrying their sheaves?"

CHAPTER 4

Timely Recruits

"The Holy Spirit breatheth where It will."

AFTER the new mother house had been completed and more extensive labors were undertaken by the Community the Sisters redoubled their petitions to Heaven for laborers to share in the spiritual harvest. Their prayers were not in vain; for scarcely had they completed the removal to St. Francis Convent, when a postulant who was destined by God to become one of their most illustrious members, humbly sought admission to their number. This young woman was Miss Teresa Bucher, the future Mother Agnes, a convert to the Church, and most enthusiastic in the newly found treasure of Faith. The fervor of the young aspirant was remarkable; and, as subsequent events will show, this fervor was but a foreshadowing of the long years of devoted service which she was to render the Community in the various offices for which her prudence and administrative ability qualified her. Well may we pause to ask, "Was it merely a coincidence that one, who for nearly half a century was to impress her spirit and personality on the Order, was the first to be admitted to its nursery?"

The timely entrance of this chosen soul into the Community and her influence in promoting the growth and expansion of the Order, justify the writer in considering somewhat at length the various circumstances which contributed to the remarkable vocation of this noble religious who, reared outside the true Fold, could say with the Apostle of the Gentiles, "By the grace of God, I am what I am."

Her parents, Henry and Magdalene Bucher, were conspicuous for the integrity of their thoroughly Christian lives. Their home was in the little Swiss village of Niederwanigen in the Canton of Zurich which lies amidst most picturesque scenes of the Old World, with the Alps towering away in the distance and its mirrored lakes glimmering in the sunshine, reflecting the beauteous earth and heaven.

Unfortunately, the republic of Switzerland, which has the distinction of being the first in Europe to assert its ability to administer its civil affairs without the assistance of hereditary rulers, cast off likewise the authority of the Church and entered into most lamentable religious struggles that resulted in a multiplication of sects. The ancestors of the Bucher family were among those who had left the true Faith and joined the Evangelical Reformed Church. With true Christian courtesy, however, they respected the religious beliefs of those who belonged to other denominations, and carefully avoided controversy which might lessen reverence for those things held sacred by others. Henry Bucher was engaged in the potash industry and also cultivated at his own home a vineyard to which he gave careful attention.

The Bucher home was a happy one. The parents were industrious; and, through skillful management of business affairs, became prosperous and able to provide bountifully for the four children who had come to bless their union. Of this little group, Verena was the youngest. Another daughter, Regula, and two sons, Henry and Frederick, completed the family circle. Every effort was made by the pious parents to give their children a thoroughly Christian training. Above all, they insisted on prompt obedience,—a virtue which led to the highest respect for authority and a consequent peace and harmony in the home. A great reverence for everything pertaining to religion was inculcated both by precept and example; and this training was apparent in after years throughout the remarkable career of the daughter who was to consecrate her life to God's service.

The Bucher children were sent to the village school where they received careful instruction, which, supplemented by careful home training, prepared them to take their place among the world's great army of industrious men and women. Prematurely, however, they were brought face to face with the stern realities of life; for at an early age the happy home circle was broken by the death of both parents. These had lived only long enough to begin to enjoy the fruit of their well-spent years in the service of their little ones, whom they had hoped would be the joy and support of their declining years.

Scarcely old enough to venture beyond the kind watchfulness

REVEREND MOTHER MARY AGNES, O. S. F

of family friends, the orphaned children remained at the old homestead, and continued as best they could to perform the responsible duties which had been thrust upon them. The principal care of the household devolved upon Verena, the youngest member of the household, as Regula, the older sister, was almost incapacitated from active duty on account of a sore arm which was pronounced by able physicians incurable.

When the two boys reached an age when they believed they were able to rely on their own resources, they left the old homestead in care of their sisters and set sail for America. On reaching the country, they felt very hopeful of making a fortune. With the natural thrift and hardiness with which they were endowed, they succeeded admirably in their new surroundings, and in their letters to their sisters were enthusiastic in their praise of the country which afforded them greater prospects of a successful future than they could have hoped for in their own little republic. These encouraging reports finally led the Bucher girls to decide to leave the old home and to join their fortunate brothers, who had so eagerly sought to convince them of the great advantages to be enjoyed in the New World. Affairs were soon settled at home, and buoyed up by the brilliant prospects of success awaiting them, they bade farewell to their old friends, and were soon out on the great ocean beyond which lay the land of promise, to which their youthful hopes had allured them. Verena was at this time seventeen, and her sister twenty-four years old. What the future held in store for them was surely not dreamed of by either. And here we are reminded of the truth of the words,

> "There is a divinity that shapes our ends
> Rough hew them as we may."

Led on by a seemingly irresistible force, they braved separation from ties that endeared them to their own loved country and the dangers of a long ocean voyage which would bring them to a land with whose language and customs they were unfamiliar. There they would labor for those whose interest extended no further than the service which could be obtained from willing hands. It was in the year 1852 that the travelers arrived in America—the same year that Bishop Neumann assumed the episcopal dignity in Philadelphia. Ordinarily, we should say that it was a mere coincidence; but on reflecting on subsequent events, we are forcibly impressed with the fact that it was God's way of answering the prayers of His servants. When the good Shepherd of the vast flock entrusted to his care in the diocese of Philadelphia realized the pressing needs for which he must make provision, fervent were the prayers directed to Heaven for laborers to assist in the various works which his zeal suggested. The formation of a religious community was one of the means for accomplishing the ends proposed. For the continuance of such an apostolate, there was need of strong, generous souls animated with the spirit of Christ, who could take up the cross of daily sacrifice for the welfare of others. The good Guardian Angel of the diocese bore the prayerful message across the waters; and that message found an echo in the heart of the young Swiss girl, Verena Bucher, who though not of the household of Faith, was disposed to do the will of God as it was manifested to her. Undoubtedly, it was the voice of the Holy Spirit which breatheth where It will that urged the two young girls to join their brothers in far-away America, for as St. Francis de Sales says, "God makes people co-operate with Him when they are the least aware of it."

The journey across the great ocean was one of wondrous delights. For the first time, the girls witnessed the mysterious beauties of Nature that lay beyond the little valleys encompassed by the rocky fastnesses of Switzerland. What a strange, crowded world they had entered, they realized, as they were jostled by the throngs at the landing. How unlike to the quiet Swiss village beyond which they had never before peered! The discomforts of their new surroundings were soon forgotten in the joyful meeting with their anxiously sought brothers; and ere long they were listening to the recitals of the exciting experiences which had been met with in America.

A favorable offer of employment induced the two girls to journey to Pottsville, Pa., and soon we find them both engaged in profitable labor with kind employers, who appreciated their earnest application to duty. Regula, fortunately, was employed by a zealous Catholic family, whose edifying example soon induced her to desire to embrace their treasured Faith. Accordingly she was instructed and baptized by Reverend Joseph Hamm of St. Clair, Pa. Evidently, Regula did not inform Verena of her changed religious views as she knew it would be displeasing to her. When at last the truth was known, Verena's indignation was so great at the disloyalty she believed her sister displayed in renouncing the religion of her parents, that she thought she had sufficient reasons for severing all friendly relations with her. This she did, and for several weeks kept up her resentment bitterly. Regula, who loved her sister dearly, and from whom she had hitherto received only the kindest consideration, was very much grieved at her sister's changed attitude towards her. The trial was of short duration, however, for Verena's natural sense of justice and desire for a knowledge of the truth conquered her obstinacy, and led her to inquire into the teachings of the religion which had so completely captivated her sister. An opportunity presented itself to her to confide her difficulties to Reverend Mathias Meurer. This zealous priest was very painstaking in his presentation of the grand truths of the Catholic Church to the young girl who was most eagerly seeking the light of Faith. As her mind was open to conviction, the mists were soon cleared away. She fully realized that her old views were erroneous, and that her duty lay in embracing the Faith which she had formerly so emphatically denounced. As her keen intellect grasped quickly the information imparted to her, she was soon sufficiently instructed to be received into the Church. On the feast of St. Clare, 1855, she made a public abjuration of the faith she had formerly professed, and was baptized in presence of the congregation of St. Bonifacius Church, at St. Clair, Pa. The name, Teresa, was substituted for Verena in baptism, and under the patronage of this great saint the new convert sought eagerly to receive further information of the great Faith of which she had unfortunately been deprived in her earlier years.

Only three months had elapsed since her sister had made the same declaration of Faith. And now the two sisters who had become so estranged on account of their opposing religious views, were happily reconciled and, united in heart and mind, pleasant family relations were renewed.

God had strangely rewarded Regula's sacrifice in bearing patiently her sister's unkind treatment; for the sore on her arm which had baffled the skill of the most able physicians was almost miraculously healed after her baptism, and was never known to open again. The religious vocation which resulted from Verena's humble submission to grace will justify the truth that God is not outdone in generosity.

In Pottsville there existed, unfortunately, contentions between ecclesiastical authorities and the trustees, which necessitated the temporary closing of the Church of St. John the Baptist. This condition rendered it necessary for the parishioners to attend services elsewhere. This will account for the baptism of the Bucher girls at St. Clair, Pa., instead of at Pottsville where they resided, as part of the congregation of the interdicted church went to St. Patrick's Church in Pottsville, while others attended St. Bonifacius' at St. Clair. The frequent presence of Bishop Neumann was required at Pottsville in order to adjust difficulties; and on one of these visits he learned of the baptism of the new converts and of their zeal in the practice of their religious duties. He thus became greatly interested in them and instructed Father Hamm to prepare them for confirmation. This sacrament was administered in the same church in which they had been baptized, in the month of October, 1855. It was in April of the same year that the first spiritual daughters of St. Francis had been clothed with the holy habit of religion. How earnest had been the prayers of this pious trio for companions to share their labors! God was not unmindful of their entreaties, for already He was preparing fervent souls to carry on the work long after their own labors were ended. And one of these was the little Swiss convert who, day by day, was surrendering herself to grace and making her soul more pleasing to God and more worthy of greater gifts.

It had been the great pleasure of the two converts to meet Bishop Neumann personally on the day before they were confirmed. The meeting was an unexpected one, and quite informal, as it occurred as they were returning from St. Clair whither they had gone to confession, preparatory to receiving confirmation. Father Hamm had gone to Pottsville to convey the Bishop to St. Clair, and on his return met the two girls who were on their way home. When he recognized them, he stopped the carriage in order that they might greet the Bishop and receive his blessing. It was a memorable meeting for them, as they had never before been privileged to speak to so great a dignitary of the Church. His Lordship made them quite at their ease by his unassuming manner and kindly words of greeting; and they continued their way home with happy hearts and impressed with the holiness of the good Bishop with whom they had conversed. On the other hand, Bishop Neumann was highly edified by the appearance of the two girls, but especially of Teresa in whom he seemed to discern extraordinary qualities which would make her a valuable member of a religious Order. Acting upon his conviction, the Bishop took a special interest in her, and on his occasional visits to Pottsville gave her additional instruction, and acquainted her especially with the religious life. As the Sisters of St. Francis gave great promise of continuing successfully the work begun, he spoke to her of the great good that might be accomplished by becoming one of their number. There was no urging necessary; for on the very day of her baptism, Mother Agnes afterwards admitted, she was strongly impelled to give herself unreservedly to God's service. So with the encouragement given by the Bishop, Teresa decided without delay to become a member of the Community which had been so highly recommended to her. Being assured of her sincerity, Bishop Neumann sought the necessary permission for her entrance. With great gratitude to God for so promising a member, Mother Francis gladly consented to her admission. Being informed of this decision, Teresa soon made preparations for the departure from her relatives and friends, and in the company of Father Meurer, presented herself at the novitiate on Reed Street, where she was warmly welcomed, and received into the little Franciscan family with true sisterly affection. She had entered with high ideals of the religious life and with an earnest determination to follow the lowly Saint of Assisi along the way of poverty and humility; therefore, we shall not be surprised to find that from the outset occasions were presented to her for satisfying her desire for humiliations in order that she might become humble. The Community had just become fairly established in the new mother house; and with their limited number of workers and the constant demand for their services, there was no one who found time hanging heavy on her hands, for there was plenty of work to be done. There was no question among those eager aspirants for perfection about the merit of obedience; consequently, when Teresa was asked to go to the laundry to learn her first lesson in religious obedience, no comment was made by the members of the Community, nor did it occur to Teresa that she was being put to the test rather soon. She had come to the convent quite daintily clad in the prevailing fashion of the day; and her attire was rather inappropriate for duty in the laundry. For a moment she waited to be told to put on a more suitable dress, but as there seemed to be no notice taken of her appearance, she quietly went to her task as she was and made her first self-conquest. Outside of the cloister, such a course of action would have seemed folly; but to those intent on reaching religious perfection, it was but the folly of the Cross, and only one of the little things employed to make more sure the performance of greater deeds. "It is trifles that make perfection," says a writer, "but perfection is no trifle."

One of the greatest trials imposed on those who aspire to the poverty of the religious state is that of soliciting alms. It was this test that the Little Poor Man of Assisi made of his virtue when on his visit to the Eternal City he clothed himself in a beggar's ragged garments and asked alms of the passers-by. Like their holy Founder, the poor Daughters of St. Francis did not disdain to go from door to door soliciting aid for the maintenance of their pious works. It was a lesson that each one in turn had to learn early in the novitiate, and one which made them realize the truth of the words of the devout author of the Imitation of Christ: "Here no one can stand securely unless he humble himself exceedingly."

The new postulant was, accordingly, called on to perform this humble duty also. If there were still any vanity lurking in the young Swiss girl after her trial in the laundry, surely it disappeared after several tours of the city markets, or the house-to-house canvass which she had to make to secure the necessary provisions.

Another difficult task for those who had naturally no aptitude for caring for the sick, was the visitation to the homes of the poor to attend them in their illness. This meritorious labor Teresa also shared early in her novitiate, and found therein ample opportunity to add to her self-conquests.

From the very outset, the young convert was given a severe test of her constancy; but never was she found wanting in the slightest sacrifice which was required of her. No one was more obedient, no one more exact in the observance of the rules. After a postulantship of only six weeks, as there seemed to be no doubt in the mind of Mother Francis as to the solidity of her vocation, Teresa was informed that she might be clothed with the holy habit of religion. Happily the feast of her holy patron, St. Teresa, was appointed for the investiture. Reverend Bonaventure Keller presided at the ceremony, which was held after High Mass at the altar of St. Francis in St. Alphonsus Chapel. Teresa received in religion the name of Sister Mary Agnes. Another postulant, Miss Ellen Donnelly, was also invested and was known as Sister Mary Alphonsia. If one may judge from the fervor displayed by Teresa during her brief period of probation, it must have been a happy day when she was permitted to make the first public manifestation of her desire to consecrate herself to God, and when she could say in the words of the Psalmist: "What shall I render to the Lord for all the mercies He has shown to me?" Why one reared in heresy on a foreign shore, and speaking a foreign tongue, should have been chosen by God in place of so many others who, from a worldly viewpoint, would have seemed better qualified, is not for us to question; for "Who hath known the mind of the Lord and who shall be His counsellor?"

At this time the rule permitted those who had given evidence of a true vocation, to make final vows at the expiration of a year. As Mother Francis was convinced that Sister Agnes gave every evidence of persevering in her determination to become a worthy member of the Community, she gave her consent that she should be admitted to profession. Another auspicious day was chosen for the occasion, that of the Feast of St. Peter of Alcantara, who had so securely led others along the path of perfection. In accordance with the humility and poverty which characterized the Community, the ceremony was marked with the greatest simplicity. The little chapel in the mother house was the scene of the happy event. Reverend Father Nicola, a humble son of St. Francis, was delegated by the Bishop to receive the vows of Sister Agnes and likewise of Sister Alphonsia, her only companion in the novitiate. There were present no great ecclesiastical dignitaries. No eager, admiring relatives and friends were there to listen to the earnest, inspiring words of consecration by which the young novices promised their life-long service to the King of kings. No grand music echoed throughout God's holy house, other than the simple hymns sung by the Sisters' untrained voices without accompaniment, as the poverty of those days rendered it impossible to purchase an organ.

"Far easier is it," says an author, "to experience than to describe the joy and consolation of the fervent soul on the blessed privilege of being permitted to consecrate oneself to God in the religious life. Such a grace can never be adequately appreciated by the recipient nor by those who witness the ceremony." The profession of a religious, always so impressive, was in those far-away days, when vocations were comparatively rare and greater sacrifices were required, regarded by the world as even more sacred than at the present time, when fervor and rigid discipline have become somewhat relaxed. That her obligation to aspire to greater perfection was considered a serious duty by Sister Agnes, there is no hesitation in asserting. The hitherto eager aspirant for the realization of Franciscan ideals, now bound by vow to still greater obligations, became a model of religious observance to even the most exemplary of her companions.

A brief trial of mission life had been given Sister Agnes, as she was among the number who endured the hardships at the orphanage at Tacony. So marked had been her virtuous conduct that in December, 1859, only two months after her profession, she was recalled to the mother house to take charge of the novitiate. And but a year later, the superiorship of St. Francis Convent was also delegated to her.

Little did the humble young religious realize that in a few years the experience which she gained in these responsible positions, and the capabilities which were made manifest, would result in her being chosen to guide the frail Franciscan bark over the untried seas of pioneer days.

In the summer of 1859, after four years of the life of the Community had glided by with no cessation of distracting duties, Mother Francis, mindful of the invitation our Lord addressed to His disciples, "Come apart into a desert place and rest awhile," deemed the time opportune for the Sisters to renew their spiritual forces by

REVEREND MOTHER MARY ALOYSIA, O. S. F.

a period of retreat. Assured of the truth that all graces come through Mary, Mother arranged that it should open on the Feast of our Blessed Lady's Assumption. The exercises, which were conducted for a period of ten days by a Redemptorist Father, the Reverend Lorenz Holzer, made the Sisters realize more fully the blessed privilege of speaking to God in silence, and the necessity of learning the one thing necessary which the great saint of Clairvaux sought in his query, "Why hast thou come hither?" It proved, too, a time of separation of the fervent from the tepid; for one novice, disheartened by the continued prospect of so many sacrifices, took leave of the Community, and returned to her home after a year's trial.

Early in the summer of 1859, the Sisters rejoiced to have three promising members clothed with the holy habit of St. Francis. These were Sisters Josepha, Walburga and Bonaventure. The feast of the saintly queen of Hungary, in November of the same year, was also made memorable by the reception of four postulants, who were known in religion as Sisters Aloysia, Petronella, Teresa, and Isabella. Of these two groups, all persevered on the royal road upon which they had entered except one who had not sufficiently broken with the ties that bound her to the world to continue in the narrow way of the religious life.

But although there was one lacking in spiritual fiber, there was another among the number who excelled in eagerness to reach the heights of Franciscan glory, and who was destined to be closely associated with Mother Agnes during her long years in the office of superior general and to become her worthy successor in that office. This was Miss Johanna Hofer, the future Mother Aloysia, whose name recalls to her many spiritual daughters loved memories of the kind, motherly solicitude with which she labored to advance the interests of the Community to which she was so sincerely devoted. Like that of the Savior Himself, her life of preparation was a long one for the great work the future had in store for her, as she labored for years in obscure missions and was unknown except to the few with whom her duties brought her in contact. As she emerges from her solitude to assume more weighty burdens, we shall see the true character of this saintly mother whose life was to be so closely bound with that of the Community itself.

With the sublime is often associated the ridiculous. Thus, variety tends to relieve monotony and gives zest to what might otherwise become irksome. As Mother Francis' generosity had no limitations, and as there were no barriers erected against any appeal for mercy, demands which seemed to be nothing less than impositions and critical tests of her great-heartedness, were occasionally made, even by those who were her sincerest well-wishers. One instance will surely prove the truth of this assertion. During the superiorship of Sister Agnes at the mother house, in Holy Week of 1860, Reverend Father Leuermann sent an urgent message to Mother Francis asking her to take charge of a little girl who was homeless and friendless. The touching appeal found a ready response in Mother Francis' kind heart; and although at the time it seemed almost impossible to have another added to their number of dependents, she consented to receive the little one. In a short time two women presented themselves at the convent door, one of whom carried in her arms a little bundle. With a look of merriment in her kind eyes, she informed the Sister portress that she had brought the little girl whom Mother Francis had promised to receive. The other Sisters had in the meantime gone to church. This left only the portress to attend to duties at home. She was not a little surprised that Mother Francis should have accepted so helpless a charge, but nevertheless took the little creature into her custody, and the ladies departed. At once she proceeded to investigate the unexpected bundle of humanity and, unwrapping it with care, beheld to her amazement the shining black face of a little negro only a few days old. The Sisters were scarcely less astonished when they returned and heard the crying baby. Mother Francis laughed heartily at the deception practised by the good Father Leuermann, but determined to waive the racial question and to "mother" the little one as best she could. Further investigation proved that the infant was a foundling which had been left in one of the confessionals in St. Peter's Church.

Charlotte, as she was called, remained with her kind guardians until she was seven years old, when she was sent to the orphanage at Tacony. After she had made her first Holy Communion, she went to live with the Sisters of her own race and color in Baltimore and later she became a member of their Community. Thus again we see the charity of Mother Francis rewarded; for not only was the hapless little infant saved to the Faith, but, by her later consecration to God's service, was enabled to exercise an apostolate for the uplifting of her own down-trodden race.

As we note from time to time the glorious results of Mother Francis' seemingly imprudent ventures, we are reminded of the mysterious alchemist who was said to possess the strange power of transmuting base metals into purest gold. The tender care given the little colored girl was but a beginning of the interest with which the Community was inspired at a later day in the welfare of negro children; for at the present time, three flourishing institutions are conducted by the Sisters for the dusky little ones. These are taught the truths of religion and all that is calculated to make them worthy citizens of the now glorious "land of the free," which guarantees to them the rights and privileges of which their race was so long unfortunately deprived.

CHAPTER 5

A Season of Adversity

"· · · Darkness in the pathway of man's life
Is but the shadow of God's providence
By the great Sun of Wisdom cast thereon;
And what is dark below is light in Heaven."

AMIDST the general depression caused by forebodings of civil strife in 1860, the shadows deepened over the diocese of Philadelphia when the sad message was flashed over the wires that the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann had suddenly been stricken by death. As there had been no intimation of even a passing illness to any one except to those of his most intimate associates, the intelligence was like a thunderbolt from a clear sky. When their loss was fully realized, profound was the grief expressed by the flock at the loss of their faithful Shepherd. Although the departure of the loved Prelate seemed untimely, it only served to show forth his grand, noble soul and his untiring zeal; for it was while "laboring in the Master's cause that alone, unaided, and abandoned, we might almost say, his life went out." When we recall that he had clung confidently to the suffering Savior in all the trials of life, even from his early years, and that he chose a device at the time of his episcopal consecration bearing the words, Passion of Christ, strengthen me, we shall feel quite safe in saying that his daily prayer had been that he might share with his beloved Lord the loneliness of His last hour, and that God had granted his heart's desire.

By none was the loss of the good Bishop felt more keenly than by the little Franciscan Community which owed to him not only its existence, but also the inspiration and encouragement that made possible its continuance. With his memory was associated all that was noble and consistent with the ideals of the religious life. Now that they could no longer be directed by his wise counsels, his bereaved spiritual children with anxious hearts inquired of one another, "Who now will be our guide?" Could their good father have answered their query, again he would have consoled them, undoubtedly, by a glance at the Crucified, saying "My dear children, behold your Guide."

Although every one of his spiritual daughters felt a personal loss in being deprived of his fostering care, upon Mother Francis the burden of grief fell most heavily; for his paternal interest in the welfare of her religious family had animated her courage in many a dark day of trial.

In grateful remembrance of their departed Shepherd, the Community gave expression to their grief in earnest appeals to Heaven that his soul might repose among the Blessed; although each one felt assured that he was already enjoying the vision of God whom he had so faithfully served.

Reverently his earthly remains were consigned to a vault in St. Peter's Church, where they have been lovingly guarded by his Redemptorist confreres for seven decades of years. Thither the faithful, confident of the efficacy of his prayers before the throne of the Most High, have repaired, seeking his assistance in their spiritual and temporal needs. And not in vain has been their confidence; for already numerous instances of his powerful intercession have been sufficiently attested to warrant the Holy See in declaring the excellence of his virtues, and in according to the holy servant of God, the title of Venerable. Confidently we hope, and earnestly we pray that the Church may be still further assured of his extraordinary virtue, and that at no far-distant day she may crown him with her undying laurels.

As we close the pages which record the glorious episcopate of the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann, we turn to another chapter no less remarkable in the annals of the diocese of Philadelphia. It is the chapter in which events center around the Right Reverend James Frederick Wood, conspicuous among those in the episcopal See of Philadelphia for having been a native of the Quaker City and a convert to the Faith from Unitarianism. As coadjutor to Bishop Neumann, he had familiarized himself with the affairs of the diocese, so that he was able to bring to a successful issue the projects already conceived by his illustrious predecessor, and also to inaugurate others which his prudent administrative ability suggested.

While the Sisters of St. Francis felt that by Bishop Neumann's death their strongest earthly prop was removed, they, nevertheless, entertained the hope that God would provide for the continuance of the Institute which had already received so many proofs of His beneficent care. And their trust was not in vain; for they soon realized that in Bishop Wood they were to have a friend no less interested in their welfare. During his coadjutorship, he had learned of the splendid work of Mother Francis and her spiritual daughters; and now that he himself had to assume the responsibility as chief Shepherd, he was most eager that they should extend their ministrations, and watched over the Community with the tender solicitude of a kind and devoted father. The Bishop loved the simplicity of these children of St. Francis, and frequently made informal visits to the mother house to inquire about their material and spiritual progress. On one occasion he entered the convent unannounced while the Sisters were at prayers in chapel, and made his way to the refectory where he surveyed the bare, neatly scoured tables with no little solicitude as to how the Sisters fared. Scarce had he entered the room when he heard faint peals of a bell announcing the Angelus. As the sound seemed nearby, he glanced around to find out who the ringer might be, for he thought he was quite alone in the room. As he saw no one, he approached the place whence the sounds came, and found to his surprise that it was a pious little Capuchin in a quaint old-fashioned clock, who had summoned him to pay homage to Heaven's Queen. It was a pleasant surprise to the Sisters on entering the refectory to partake of their frugal meal, to find their good Bishop awaiting their arrival. There was no embarrassment at this unexpected meeting, nor were there any explanations about the scanty fare which was placed before them. They gloried in professing the poverty which St. Francis had so earnestly recommended, and like the first followers of the Poverello, were happy to suffer the want of many things.

That the Bishop's interest in the Community was more than a passing one, was shown by the substantial assistance that he gave frequently. On his very first visit to the mother house, he no doubt became more fully aware of the great privations which the Sisters had to endure; and, like a good father, asked Mother Francis if there was any way in which he could be of assistance. As there was a ring of sincerity in the kind words of the Bishop which invited confidence in his goodness of heart, Mother Francis after a moment's consideration told him candidly that she had received a bill for taxes recently and had no means at her disposal to meet the obligation. Without hesitation, the good Bishop asked for the bill and promised to be responsible for the payment of the sum required. His goodness of heart prompted him to continue the payment of the taxes each year until the Community received its charter.

Up to this time, the missionary activity of the Community did not extend beyond the confines of the diocese of Philadelphia, although an extension of the work had been favorably considered by the venerable Founder. A new field of labor into which they were invited was the diocese of Albany, when Reverend Leopold Maczygemba, Commissary General of the Friars Minor Conventual, in an interview with Mother Francis, prevailed upon her to reserve Sisters to teach the girls in the parish schools under his charge in Utica and Syracuse.

Scarcely two months had elapsed after Bishop Neumann's death, when Mother Francis received a telegram from the Reverend Commissary General, asking her to send Sisters at once to the School of the Assumption in Syracuse. It was an unexpected request at the time, and one which was rather difficult to comply with on so short a notice, as the small number in the Community made it almost out of the question to consider taking any Sisters from the work in which they were then engaged. A further reason seemed at first to preclude the advisability of sending anyone, as Bishop Wood had not been informed of the proposed plan of expansion; and it was impossible to confer with him as he was on an extended visitation of the out-lying districts of his diocese, and would not return for some time. Mother Francis feeling assured, however, that she had at least the tacit permission of the Bishop, decided to go at once to Syracuse. She appointed Sisters Antonia, Angela, and a novice to accompany her. They opened the school on March 13, 1860; but after a few days, realizing that the number of teachers was quite out of proportion to the enrollment, Mother Francis returned to Philadelphia in order to adjust affairs so that others might be spared for work in the new school. About a month later she returned, accompanied by Sisters Bernardine, Alphonsia, Petronella, and Josepha. In the meantime, conditions had been adjusted

THE MOST REVEREND JAMES F. WOOD, D. D.

at the School of the Assumption, so that the Sisters she had brought with her were sent to Utica to open another school under the superiorship of Sister Bernardine. As soon as conditions in the new missions warranted, Mother Francis returned to the mother house in Philadelphia.

As we shall presently see, the decision given by Mother Francis to extend the labors of the Sisters to the diocese of Albany, was to be one of the decisive events in the history of the Community, the importance of which she did not live long enough to realize fully. Her intentions had been the very best, no doubt prompted as the result of earnest prayer for guidance; and the outcome was evidently, at least the permissive will of God, whose foresight penetrates the dark veil of the future, and directs the affairs of His servants for His own wisely conceived ends.

The life of the superior of every religious community is a varied one. At every one's beck and call, she must continually offer herself as a victim on the altar of sacrifice, and hasten hither and thither to adjust matters at a moment's notice with no thought of her own personal convenience. And Mother Francis was no exception. With true maternal solicitude for her little religious family, she gave her attention, now to one, again to another, of her religious houses, encouraging the Sisters, and instructing them as to the best means to be employed to carry on their work satisfactorily.

On November twenty-first, 1860, Right Reverend Bishop Wood made his first official visit to the mother house to preside at the religious ceremony at which Sister Aloysia and Sister Teresa were admitted to profession. Again we meet Sister Aloysia, of whom we made particular mention at the time of her investiture. With all the devotedness of a fervent novice, she now earnestly aspired to consecrate herself irrevocably to God's service by the vows of religion. From her entrance into the Community, there was noted a firm, patient endurance of the sacrifices imposed upon her by the rigid discipline of those days, and a sound judgment and zeal ever tempered by the greatest prudence. With these valuable assets, she steadily acquired other virtues which enabled her in her many years of service to keep aglow the flame of Franciscan ideals which now shines to light up and cheer her declining days.

Although a part of the Community had been transferred to the new missions in a neighboring diocese, Bishop Wood still continued his kindly interest in the little Franciscan band, whose lowly services did not escape his watchful eye. For a time His Lordship directed the affairs of the Community which had been delegated to the Friars Minor Conventual by Right Reverend Bishop Neumann. In the autumn of 1861, however, when Reverend Father Grundner of the Servites of Mary became pastor of St. Alphonsus Church, Bishop Wood appointed this worthy priest confessor and spiritual adviser of the Sisters of St. Francis.

For some time the Right Reverend Bishop foresaw difficulties arising for the Community which, if not adjusted, would cause considerable embarrassment. Prudent as he was, he determined to avert unpleasant consequences which might result from delay, and proceeded to bring about a settlement of affairs in order not to cause the Sisters unnecessary anxiety.

It seemed quite evident to Bishop Wood that the Sisters in New York would in the near future become diocesan. If this should be the case, among other difficulties, there would arise a question about the title to the property at 505 Reed Street, the deed of which had been signed, not only by Mother Francis, but by Sisters Bernardine and Antonia, who had been assigned to duty in the New York diocese. In order to avoid controversy Bishop Wood decided to invite the two Sisters from Syracuse to attend the religious profession in November, after which he determined he would settle the question about the deed, as well as other matters which he foresaw should be decided without further delay. Accordingly, after the religious ceremony was concluded, he called for an assembly of the Sisters, including those from New York; and when all was in readiness, he produced the deed which he asked Sisters Bernardine and Antonia to make over to him and the Sisters of Philadelphia. This being done, he made known another object of his meeting by stating that he gave his permission to the Sisters from Syracuse to return to Philadelphia if they so desired, provided, however, that they should obtain the consent of the Ordinary of the Albany diocese. He furthermore made clear to the Sisters that Mother Francis was the superior general of the whole Sisterhood and that she had authority to appoint superiors for the Community.

There was, after this meeting, no little cause for the apprehension that a separation of the two communities was probable. Finally when the two Sisters returned to Syracuse, there was an additional reason for believing that at no far distant day the Sisters in New York would be independent of the Philadelphia Community. That the Sisters of Philadelphia were surprised as well as grieved at the thought of impending separation, there is no hesitation in asserting. As yet their numbers were few, and storm-tossed as they had been in their frail Franciscan bark, the Sisters together had shared the common dangers and hopefully looked forward to the day when brighter skies would insure that their sailing would be more secure. But now other clouds portended that greater trials awaited them, when, deprived of esteemed associates, their efforts to weather the storms encountered on their journey would be less effective.

Bishop Wood's disposal of the question relating to the preservation of the Institute in its integrity was as usual prompted by the highest prudence and wisdom, which were marked characteristics displayed by His Lordship in all the multiplicity of affairs which called for his attention during the whole course of his episcopate. But in spite of the efforts of the Right Reverend Bishop Wood to preserve unity, the New York Community gradually drifted away from the original Institute, bearing with it Sister Bernardine, one of the co-foundresses, and others of her worthy associates. But despite the fact that the separation at last became quite complete, there nevertheless continued to exist between the two religious families the most cordial relations and that sweet spirit of charity which unites in heart all the children of St. Francis.

CHAPTER 6

The First Benevolent Institution

"The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
Are scattered at the feet of man like flowers."

THOSE distressing days in the history of the nation of which the poet sang in his lines,

> ". . . our very household songs
> Are heavy with a nation's griefs and wrongs,"

had been likewise for the little band of Franciscan Sisters in Philadelphia, a season of tribulation. Towards the close of the year, a gleam of hope seemed to pierce through the darkness which had surrounded them, when they were assured that they were at last to have a place dignified by the name of "hospital," where they might care more efficiently for their dear brethren in Christ, the numerous sick, whose miseries called loudly for their assistance. Already existing charitable institutions were overtaxed in their efforts to relieve the ordinary physical ills of humanity; and the alleviation of the additional evils which were to fall upon the country when the cross of war lay in the path of the nation's duty, called for other laborers to enter the field of humanitarianism.

The institution of another hospital at this particular time seems to have been mercifully providential and shows forth the Apostolic mission of the Church which at all times provides her many children with a remedy for every evil. "It is the Church," says Archbishop Ireland, "that in her ten thousand centers of activity, and the wonderful engines of power which she controls, is committed to charity and makes of the works of charity the evidences of her divine life and her title to the respect of the world. Suffering anywhere and everywhere is her golden opportunity. She seeks it out; she rejoices when she has found it, and binds herself at once to the task of relieving it, with all the glad hopefulness of the tired warrior stepping into the field of battle, upon which each successive appearance has been the signal that fresh laurels shall decorate his brow."

The pages of the Holy Gospel show forth no virtue of our Blessed Lord more prominently than His compassion for suffering humanity. "Heal the sick," said the Master, as He bade His disciples depart on their first missionary journey, giving them the promise at the same time of performing miracles in their behalf. His precept was forcible, but more powerful still was His own glorious example. What more touching picture of the Consoling Christ can be recalled than that in which we see Him coming down from the mountain into the midst of "His disciples and a very great multitude of people,—the sick, the lame, the blind, the withered, who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases?" It is a true picture of the Great Healer who compassionated every woe and brought joy to every heart.

"The Catholic Church," says Cardinal Gibbons, "guided by this beautiful example of our Redeemer, has always proclaimed the sanctity of human suffering and of human life. . . . This recognition of man's dignity and of the sanctity of human suffering is the secret of that quickening power of benevolence which always animates the Church wherever she gains a foothold."

From Apostolic times to the present day, no work of Christian charity has received from her more worthy consideration than that of caring for the sick,—a task in which she has been particularly aided by the various Sisterhoods, whose members are by their profession devoted to the service of others.

The costume of the nun is indeed sombre and unshapen; but her countenance reflects the beauty and love that is acquired by her constant communication with her divine Spouse. It is not so much the medicine and daintily prepared food which she provides for her charges that are most valued, but the friendly smile, the kind and hopeful words that reveal her Christ-like sympathy.

The world bows in reverence at the name of Florence Nightingale, whose heroic deeds in behalf of suffering soldiers has made her name a familiar one in every household. "But," adds the author of Our Christian Heritage, "within the breast of every Sister, there breathes the spirit of a Florence Nightingale, with this difference, that, like the angel Raphael, who concealed his name from Tobias, she hides her name from the world."

We have seen how the Community in Philadelphia in its short career had multiplied its works of charity. It had sheltered the poor working girl; protected alike the helplessness of infancy and the feebleness of old age; instructed the young; relieved and consoled the sick; helped the dying in their last struggle and prepared them for Christian burial.

In no other work had they been more interested than in caring for the sick. The daily task of visiting these in their own homes had had glorious results, as it had brought them in touch with other members of the family, who, though not physically ill, needed alleviation morally and spiritually. At a later day, we have seen that they did not hesitate to bring the homeless and destitute into their own little convent. Daily they continued the task of begging for their helpless charges "the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table," making themselves the intermediaries between the poor and their more fortunate brethren.

As demands on their charity multiplied and were out of proportion to the means at their disposal for caring for the numbers of destitute with whom they came in contact, Mother Francis decided to provide more extensive accommodations for carrying on the work. It was not, however, until the close of the year 1860, as we have said, that definite consideration was given to founding a hospital. The consent of the Right Reverend Bishop was readily obtained; and with his blessing upon the undertaking, preparations were at once begun by seeking a suitable location for the proposed institution. Finally, a large dwelling was secured at the corner of Fourth Street and Girard Avenue. The house and location were very desirable; the grounds were beautifully laid out, with a variety of fruit and shade trees forming a pleasing contrast to the bare city streets; the dwelling was spacious and in good condition, but was considered by the superstitious as an undesirable residence place as it was said to be haunted. This rumor was listened to with all the more credence as it was supported by the testimony of a physician who had leased the property for a term of three years, but vacated it at the expiration of three weeks, as he declared that the disturbance caused by the nightly revel of ghosts was unbearable. Truly, it is an ill wind that blows no one good, for the Sisters, who fortunately did not believe in ghosts, were considered by the owner of the mysterious house as very desirable tenants, and they succeeded in leasing the place at the small sum of $500.00 a year.

To those who are accustomed "to creep timidly along the shore, instead of casting themselves out boldly upon the broad ocean of

God's providence," to contract a debt of even this small sum, would be a great burden when there was no immediate prospects of being able to meet the obligation. Mother Francis still had no bank account, nor did she desire any. Like the saintly Cure of Ars, she believed that if the Community should depart from the way of holy poverty, they should not have wherewithal to live. There was, therefore, no uneasiness about paying the rent. And Mother Francis' confidence was again rewarded by the generous assistance given by Mr. Bernard Huelzemann, who proved indeed to be the friend in need.

With the aid of other kind benefactors, all was in readiness for the opening of the hospital by the tenth of December. The superiorship was held by Mother Francis herself, who appointed Sisters Margaret, Clara, Rose, Bridget, Bonaventure, Elizabeth, and Teresa as her associates.

Accommodations were provided for from fifteen to twenty patients. For aged women also there were rooms reserved where they might have a comfortable home and receive the services of the Sisters, when through feebleness or illness they were unable to care for themselves. Occasionally old men, too, were given a home there when they had no friends to whom they could look for support.

Although the hospital had been equipped with all that could be desired to insure efficiency of service, if judged by present day standards, there would have been much lacking which is now considered indispensable. Particularly was this true in operating facilities, for at that time the surgical work was performed in a small room at the end of one of the wards; while indeed many of the operative cases were attended to in the wards themselves. The methods of nursing, too, were the simplest; for we recall that the Sisters had no knowledge of the science of nursing, other than that which they had acquired themselves. Their uniform was but the plain, black habit, unconcealed by the dainty white apron, which, at the present day, is considered a necessary precautionary measure for avoiding infection. In keeping with the simplicity of methods and the Sisters themselves, was the old Quaker physician whose quaint, kindly greeting, "How art thou?" became a familiar one, as he quietly made his rounds from day to day on his errands of mercy. Vying with the Sisters in their efforts to reap the hundred-

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

fold, this charitable friend of the needy asked no remuneration for his services. This kind old Quaker benefactor of the institution in the days of its infancy, has, we trust, long since realized in eternity the blessedness promised to those who are merciful to God's suffering poor.

Founded in charity, and sustained entirely by charity during the first years of its existence, St. Mary's has been singularly blessed by God.

By anticipating events, we shall see that a constant increase in the number of those who sought admission to the hospital made it necessary to consider the obtaining of a more spacious building. A financial problem presented itself that hastened proceedings and resulted in the securing of a new site. The first property, we recall, had been leased for five years at $500.00 a year. When the time had expired, the owner perceiving that the story of the ghosts had not interfered with the progress of the institution, believed he would be justified in increasing the rental to $700.00 a year. This additional debt the Sisters were not willing to incur, as the accommodations were quite inadequate; and it would mean an outlay of money which could be put to a better use. Mother Agnes, therefore, thought it expedient to seek a new location and, after earnest consideration and prayer for light, she decided to purchase a spacious building at the corner of Palmer and Frankford Avenues which was offered for sale for $30,000. Bishop Wood favored the site and readily consented that the Sisters assume the indebtedness. Accordingly, the necessary alterations on the building were made, and the removal to the new hospital took place in July, 1864.

It was by no means an easy task to provide for the payment of the vast debt incurred by the purchase of the new building; but the Sisters in a spirit of humility again went from door to door in the name of the Lord, and secured from their good friends the funds necessary to maintain the institution and to pay the additional indebtedness as well. In this pious work of soliciting alms, no one assisted with more readiness than Mother Agnes herself, who, we recall, had in her novitiate days been thoroughly schooled in this difficult task.

The patronage of St. Mary's Hospital steadily increased day by day, so that in the year 1890 more ample provisions for patients were made by adding a new four story brick structure to the old building. Subsequently three other additions were made, until in 1914, changing conditions rendered it advisable to erect a large new building. Consequently, the old one purchased in 1864 was demolished. Nothing was spared but the foundation stones of the primitive hospital that had sheltered the sick for half a century.

At the laying of the corner stone of the new structure, Archbishop Prendergast delivered an address in which he called attention particularly to the splendid services which the Sisters had rendered in hospital work. "I wish to remind you," said His Grace, "of one fact connected with today's ceremony. Whilst giving to the able staff of physicians and nurses all the credit that is due to them, and that surely is not a little, you must not forget that the burden and responsibility, financial and otherwise, is borne by those devoted women—the Sisters of Saint Francis—who, without personal compensation, give their lives to this great work of charity. We do not stop to think how much thousands, who have been benefited by medical treatment in Saint Mary's, owe to the disinterested, unselfish charity of the Order which had the courage to undertake this great work without hope of human reward. The Sisters relied on God's blessing and the generosity of the people, and they were not disappointed, and neither will they fail now in the project formally blessed today. Their friends all over the city, who rejoice in the success of the past, who realize how much has been done gratuitously for the poor and afflicted, will be eager to have a share in the increase of the noble work—the cause of humanity and Christian charity—which the new building will enable them to accomplish. May God continue to bless the efforts of the good Sisters for the completion of this hospital as He has blessed everything they have undertaken."

On comparing the unpretentious little hospital of 1860 with the magnificent structure of today, equipped with all that the genius of man has been able to invent for facilitating and effecting the preservation and prolongation of human life, the Sisters of St. Francis may well view with pardonable pride the splendid achievements of the passing years. Hopefully do we anticipate that the Recording Angel may yet have to inscribe in the Book of Life pages in the records of St. Mary's still more glorious.

CHAPTER 7

Last Days of Mother Francis

"Leaves have their time to fall, and flowers to wither
At the north wind's breath,
And stars to set; but thou hast all seasons for thine own,
O Death!"

AS we take up again the thread of our story chronologically, we see the devoted little staff of nurses at St. Mary's under the direction of Mother Francis, bending every energy to acquire proficiency in the art of nursing. There was not much danger that these humble children of St. Francis through thought of foolish pride would lose the merit of their daily toil; for with the constant reminders around them of the uncertainty of life and the passing of earthly honor, it was no difficult task to work for God's glory and their own eternal welfare.

Up to this time, Mother Francis had filled the office of superior general only by appointment of the late Bishop Neumann. Confirmation of this authority had been given, as we have seen, by Bishop Wood, who now deemed it advisable that an election be held that the Sisters might express their opinion as to who should fill the office of superior general. Accordingly, an assembly of the Sisters was called at the mother house. Bishop Wood presided. As was expected, the Sisters expressed their approval of Mother Francis' administration by choosing her to continue in office. Thus her authority was doubly secured by canonical procedure, and ecclesiastical superiors were assured of the sentiments of the Community towards their worthy Foundress.

While busily engaged in the task of providing for the maintenance of the sick at St. Mary's, and of extending the work, Mother Francis was at the same time quite as solicitous for the other works of the Institute.

As the Sisters had given great satisfaction as teachers, requests were being made for their services in other schools. Among the first to recognize the valuable work of Mother Francis and her

Sisters in the instruction of children, were the Redemptorists who had given every encouragement to the Community from its inception. Consequently, when an appeal came to Mother Francis from the Fathers in Buffalo to take charge of teaching the younger boys in St. Mary's School, the request received immediate consideration; especially as there were prospects of being able to open a hospital in that city also. With the approbation of the Right Reverend Bishop, Mother made a trip to Buffalo to ascertain whether conditions would warrant accepting the school; and, being favorably impressed with the situation, she decided to open the new mission. Upon returning to Philadelphia, and reporting to the Bishop her impressions, she received the necessary ecclesiastical permission and proceeded at once to prepare for beginning work. Sister Mary Margaret (Mother Francis' sister) was appointed superior, with Sisters Elizabeth, Magdalen, and a postulant, Miss Johanna Bachmann (Mother Francis' daughter) as her associates.

Shortly after this school was in operation, another urgent request to accept the direction of a school in East Eden, a suburb of Buffalo, received also favorable consideration. This mission was placed under the superiorship of Sister Johanna Boll.

With the acceptance of these two missions, we note not only an advance in the expansion movement of the Community, but also an increasing interest in the work of education. But while encouragement was given to the Sisters by having their work favorably considered, they assumed greater responsibilities. Only a short time after the Community became established in Buffalo a number of aspirants to the religious life were admitted. When the time came for the investiture, arrangements were made to have the ceremony in Buffalo. Accordingly, an invitation was sent to Mother Francis to be present at the religious function which was to be held December 28, 1862.

In order to assist in arranging for the reception, Mother Francis decided to go to Buffalo about the middle of December. When she arrived she was urged to have the postulants who were then in Philadelphia come to Buffalo for investiture at the same time. Without delay Mother Francis communicated the plan to Father Grundner, and asked his advice about the proposed investing. A reply was immediately sent stating that he would by no means sanction the plan. As Father was then the spiritual director of the Community, there was no hestitation on Mother Francis' part in accepting the refusal with perfect submission, as her customary acquiescence in the decisions of her lawful superiors forbade any discussion in her mind about their disposal of affairs.

Again we pause at a decisive event in the history of the Community, and marvel at the intervention of the Great Arbiter in the destinies of men. The saintly Father Grundner in his office as spiritual guide of the Community, daily sought the light of the Holy Spirit to direct him in his God-given task. Upon the decision of this devoted servant of Mary depended the continuation of the Philadelphia Foundation of the Sisters of St. Francis which, without his timely intervention, would henceforth have had a far different history.

Owing to serious illness Mother Francis was unable to return to Philadelphia till late in February. Even then the exertion of the journey home was too much for her feeble health, and she was obliged to forego all business and to give herself completely to rest. As her condition gradually grew alarmingly worse, a specialist was called. He only confirmed the Sisters' worst fears by stating that there was no hope whatever for permanent recovery.

This sad intelligence was communicated to the Sisters in the other convents, and all joined in fervent prayers for the recovery of their good Mother, if such should be God's holy will. With a few weeks of absolute rest and excellent care, the dear patient rallied for a time and there was some sign of returning strength and vitality.

Being eager to resume her duties, Mother decided to attend the reception of several postulants in St. Alphonsus Church on the feast of St. Joseph. In those days the investiture took place in the sanctuary, and it was the duty of a superior of a Community to assist in the "clothing" of the candidate. Mother Francis had often performed this duty for her spiritual daughters; but on this occasion she over-estimated her strength and became too weak to remain till the ceremony was ended. She was taken to the mother house, leaving her part to be concluded by Sisters Agnes and Aloysia. As her condition grew more alarming, she was taken back to St. Mary's later in the day by her faithful nurse, Sister Seraphine. The

Sisters at the mother house began to realize more fully now that the emaciated form and feeble step of their good Mother were very sure evidences that she had made her last visit to St. Francis Convent and would never again assist at an investiture. Later reports of her rapidly declining strength confirmed their fears; and all waited from day to day hoping almost against hope for some encouraging news of her condition.

In May, 1863, a message was sent to Mother Francis urging her to come to Buffalo the following day. She had been somewhat stronger for a few days and would have attempted the journey for the welfare of her spiritual children. But Providence ordained otherwise. That night her condition grew alarmingly worse so that there was no possibility of her making the trip.

From this time on, there seemed to be no change for the better. The month of May glided into June when it was hoped that the sunny days and the return of the flowers and birds would have an exhilarating effect on the dear patient; but all to no avail. As the feast of St. Anthony approached, there was hope that the great Wonder Worker might through his intercession stay the hand of the Grim Destroyer, but again there was no improvement noted. As the month of June was drawing to a close, it became evident that the end was near, so that on the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, the last sacraments were administered in presence of the sorrowing Community. All outward demonstrations of grief at her departure were discountenanced by Mother Francis, who, like her holy patron, had always found earth not gray, but rosy. Like him, too, she welcomed "Sister Death" with a holy joy, thus exemplifying to the very last to her spiritual daughters that God should be served at all times in gladness of heart.

Among those who remained near their dear Mother during her last night on earth, were her trusted confidantes, Sisters Agnes and Aloysia. How eminently proper, we say, as we anticipate future events, that these two noble religious upon whom was to fall successively the mantle of authority, should have been privileged to watch this last night with their loved Mother, that they might yet learn even in death, precious lessons which might be transmitted to others in the future years.

It was not however in the darkness of night, but when the day was at its brightest on June thirtieth, that Mother Francis quietly passed away.

A short life, indeed, was that of Mother Francis if measured only by the less than two score years that were allotted her, scarcely eight of which had been devoted to the work of directing the religious Order of which she had been the Foundress. Yet if judged by the standard expressed in the lines,

> **"Our lives are measured by the deeds we do,**
> **The thoughts we think, the objects we pursue,"**

her thirty years surely would have been lengthened to many more.

The obsequies of Mother Francis were severely plain as became one who had observed most rigidly the holy vow of poverty, and had spent her religious life in the service of the poor. There were no costly floral offerings placed around the plain, unadorned coffin in which lay her mortal remains, nor was there any other worldly display made.

For two days, the body of Mother Francis was kept in St. Mary's Chapel whither throngs of admiring friends, and especially the poor whom she had befriended, came to pay their last tribute of love and respect. Solemn requiem Mass was celebrated for the deceased in St. Peter's Church, by the Reverend Father Leuermann, assisted by Reverend Fathers Hotz and Hespelein. The last absolution was pronounced by Most Reverend Archbishop Wood who had continued a firm friend and adviser to Mother Francis in all the affairs that related to the welfare of the Community.

From the church, the body was taken for interment to St. Peter's Cemetery, where it remained until, at a later day, it was placed among her spiritual daughters in the little consecrated God's acre on the convent grounds of Our Lady of Angels.

Of the inner life of Mother Francis we know but little, as humility forbade her to speak of herself; but to portray her truly noble character, we need only recall her beautiful deeds of Christlike charity; for as the poet truly says,

> **". . . It is enough**
> **To catch one glimpse of Heaven's blue**
> **For us to know the beauty of the sky."**

With an ardent longing to serve Christ in the person of the most destitute and forlorn of God's creatures, Mother Francis had shrunk from no sacrifice. Her hands were worn with toil and her frail constitution was weakened by hardships and labor from which, though superior general of the Community, she never exempted herself. In the service of her neighbor she had offered herself a living victim on the altar of sacrifice; and in her self-forgetting zeal, she might have given expression to her heart's desire to assist the poor, in the words of Blessed Teresa of Austria: "Could I wish for immortality on earth, it would be only for the power of relieving the distressed."

Considered only from the viewpoint of the modern philanthropist and in the light of humanitarianism, Mother Francis would have been regarded as a heroine of charity. But her deeds were unheralded; and only gradually, as the Institute founded under her guidance emerged from obscurity, was her part in the Divine plan for effecting a great work in the Church revealed.

As a religious, Mother Francis had sought earnestly to reach evangelical perfection and had distinguished herself in her endeavor to acquire the characteristic virtues of the lowly Saint of Assisi. In spite of labors which to others would have been a hindrance to prayer, her life seemed to be in uninterrupted union with God. In addition to the ordinary hours assigned for prayer, Mother Francis often spent whole nights before the tabernacle. And these long vigils followed days laboriously spent in the service of the poor or in the classroom.

In her spirit of mortification, she emulated the Saint of the Crucified and allowed herself no self-indulgence. No room in the convent would she permit to be set aside for her own exclusive use, nor did she indulge in the comfort of a bed, which even most of the poor have as their heritage. What little rest she allowed herself was taken in some uncomfortable place where she believed she would be unperceived.

Undoubtedly, the austerities practised by Mother Francis were prompted by high motives and sanctioned by her spiritual guides. They resulted most certainly in a heroic death to self and an enlightenment of soul which enabled her to say and to do the right thing at the right time in directing the affairs of her Community.

"When God makes use of an instrument," it has been said, "He lays it aside before the work is completed. And this He does to show that He has need of no one." In her illness Mother Francis had expressed a desire to live a little longer. But her part in the Divine plan which was being worked out was finished. To her had been confided the work of founding the Institute and of keeping it intact in primitive days through her office as superior general, which she had received through lawfully appointed authority. Through fidelity in the discharge of her duties she had succeeded in her mission, and was providentially in her last days permitted to be with those who had adhered to the original Foundation.

PART V

Reconstruction Period

CHAPTER

1. The Bruised Reed Unbroken
2. Convent of Our Lady of Angels
3. The New Chapel at the Mother House
4. The Training of the Community Teachers

CHAPTER 1

The Bruised Reed Unbroken

"We know not what we shall be, but are sure
The spark once kindled by the eternal breath
Goes not quite out."

PARALLEL with the desolation which was spread over the American nation in the memorable summer of 1863,

"When even the hopeful were hopeless,
And even the bravest were sad,"

was the grief and uncertainty of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, occasioned by the death of their venerable Foundress. They had endured poverty and privations; rebuffs and even failure at times had attended their best efforts; but at the reassuring voice of Mother Francis, they had taken heart again and all was well. Now that the fostering hand of their good Mother was removed, there was need of courage to sustain the hope that the infant Community might survive the difficulties which loomed up like great threatening clouds on the horizon.

With sincere sympathy, the Right Reverend Bishop Wood consoled his spiritual daughters, and gave them every assurance that they might still rely on his unceasing interest in their welfare. In order to make immediate provision for the government of the Community, His Lordship called for an assembly of the Sisters at St. Mary's on the afternoon of July second, and made the announcement that there would be an election in the fall of the year to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mother Francis, and that until that time Sister Agnes should be acting superior general. Certainly no one was more surprised at this choice than was Sister Agnes herself who had always assumed the attitude of the last and lowest in the house. Her capability of leadership, however, had been sufficiently tested in the important offices of superior of the mother house and mistress of novices to assure the Right Reverend Bishop that her appointment would be for the highest good of the Community.

As the time approached for the election of a new superior general, the Sisters at Buffalo were notified to send their votes to the Reverend Father Grundner. To this proposal, however, a reply was given that an election would be held in the Diocese of Buffalo. There was now no longer any doubt about the position of the Sisters of St. Francis in Buffalo. By their decision not to participate in the election with the Sisters of Philadelphia, they renounced allegiance to ecclesiastical authority in the Diocese of Philadelphia and became a separate diocesan Community.

The Philadelphia Foundation had now its full measure of tribulation. That "misfortunes come not singly," indeed, "but in whole battalions," the Sisters realized as they saw their little number diminished in a few weeks, first by death, then by withdrawal, until only nine professed Sisters and four novices remained.

Well might they have questioned the future of the Institute which had such severe tests of its endurance. But there were left in the Philadelphia Community religious women of unwavering faith who believed with the great Cardinal Newman, that as God's power had sustained them in the past, so it would still continue to lead them on.

Already there had been too many proofs that God was watching over their pious Institute; and banded together now with a stronger union, they trustfully cast themselves into the arms of Divine Providence, and continued their charitable works in the only two institutions that remained under their supervision; namely, the mother house and St. Mary's Hospital.

It had been the desire of the Right Reverend Bishop Wood that the Sisters should designate their choice for superior general by secret vote; but as the Buffalo Community did not comply with his desires, he decided to appoint a Sister for that office himself. By virtue of the confidence which Mother Francis had placed in Sister Agnes from her entrance into the Community, he thought there was no one more able than she for the general superiorship, and decided that she should continue in the office to which he had formerly appointed her only temporarily. This decision was made known to the Sisters by the Reverend Father Grundner on Ash Wednesday of the year 1864.

One would naturally be led to believe that among the little band that had been so severely tried by affliction, the decision of the Right Reverend Bishop in favor of Sister Agnes' acting as superior general would have been received with universal satisfaction, as undoubtedly the voice of Bishop Wood was recognized as that of the true shepherd. But such was not the case. Sister Agnes was one of the youngest of the Community and besides was only a convert to the Faith. The Bishop, too, was a convert; and with these considerations, it seemed evident to some dissenters that under the leadership of these two, the Institute could not prosper. Such reasoning was certainly not in accordance with the true spirit of obedience which sees in superiors only God's representatives. But as the Community was undergoing a great trial at the time, one need not be surprised at this little display of human nature.

The slight dissatisfaction displayed by some of the Sisters at her appointment did not disconcert Mother Agnes to any extent, as she entered upon the duties of her office in a spirit of humility and obedience, relying on God's assistance to direct the affairs of the Institute in accordance with His holy will. That her work was singularly blessed by God is attested by the great institutions that arose as if by magic during her administration. While much was due to her natural resourcefulness, still more must the success of her undertakings be attributed to her wonderful, childlike confidence in the assistance of Divine Providence. Mother Agnes knew how to pray. Her faith was that which removes mountains; for on many occasions, when no hope of human aid was apparent, assistance for carrying on her numerous works came from the most unexpected sources.

The first appointment which Mother Agnes made in exercising the office of superior general was that of Sister Aloysia as mistress of novices. While the novitiate at that time consisted of only four novices, it was most important for the upbuilding of the Community that they should be well trained. For this duty, no one could have been better qualified than Sister Aloysia, who, from the beginning of her religious career, had displayed those rare qualities of mind and heart which fitted her admirably for the task of training others in the way of perfection. To her care were confided Sisters Beatrix, Edmunda, Scholastica, and Benedicta, all of whom were admitted to profession in March of the year 1864, and became the first spiritual daughters of Mother Agnes.

With the acquisition of new members came the prospects of extending the work of the Community to other fields of labor. Among the first works proposed was the establishment of a hospital in the Diocese of Baltimore through the charity of Mrs. Eberhard, who promised Mother Agnes a portion of her property for the erection of an institution for the care of the sick. This appeal met with favorable consideration; and, having obtained permission of the spiritual director of the Community, the Reverend Father Grundner, Mother Agnes, accompanied by Sister Aloysia, proceeded to Baltimore to secure further information about the proposed institution.

The beautiful feast of Corpus Christi was selected on which to make the journey that was to mark the first endeavor to extend the work of the Institute outside the Diocese of Philadelphia. While Mother Agnes placed the outcome of her pious undertaking in the hands of God, she was nevertheless prepared to endure trials and disappointments to secure the accomplishment of her worthy enterprise. And on this occasion the cross was not wanting. The train arrived in Baltimore considerably behind scheduled time. When the travelers presented themselves late in the evening at the home of a friend of Mrs. Eberhard, whose hospitality they had been advised to seek, this good woman did not conceal the fact that she was a little disagreeably surprised. The first information that was imparted to the Sisters was that they had chosen an unfavorable time for an interview with Mrs. Eberhard, as she had decided not to dispose of her property till later. Then recovering her composure, the hostess became a little more friendly and set about preparing a light repast for her guests. As the Sisters were considerably disturbed at the unfriendly reception they had received, they ate very sparingly of the lunch that was set before them. Discouraged at the prospects, they retired, as soon as they were invited to do so, to await the events of the coming day. The following morning they attended Mass at St. Alphonsus Church, and prayed most earnestly that God would bless their efforts. Later, upon visiting Reverend Father Kleineidam, the rector, they again met with no encouragement, as the Reverend Father informed them that if there was to be a hospital established at all, it should be under the direction of the Sisters of Buffalo.

The happy thought then came to Mother Agnes that she should go and interview Mrs. Eberhard herself, in order to learn the true state of affairs. Accordingly the Sisters proceeded to the home of their prospective benefactress, where they received a cordial welcome, and were given every mark of hospitality. The guests were urged to remain for dinner, after which they were taken to visit the Reverend Joseph Clauss, the rector of St. Michael's Church. Here again they were welcomed most cordially by the kind-hearted priest, who gave them every encouragement to continue their enterprise, and promised that he himself would give any assistance that lay in his power. Upon his advice, they went to see the property which was to be donated for the hospital and found it consisted of three brick houses, each three stories high. The location was suitable, but the buildings needed much repairing and remodeling before they would be suitable for hospital purposes. These alterations would necessitate a considerable expenditure of money; but Father Clauss assured the Sisters that there need be no uneasiness about the funds, as he would assist in the collecting of the amount needed. For the present he advised the Sisters not to make any further arrangements, but to wait until Bishop Spalding was installed in the Diocese of Baltimore in July, before presenting their request to establish the new institution. So assured was Father Clauss of the success of the enterprise that he hastened to select his unfailing friend, St. Joseph, as the special patron of the proposed hospital. This circumstance happily reminds us that, like her great patron, St. Teresa, Mother Agnes had unbounded confidence in the assistance of good St. Joseph. And it was but fitting that the first institution which was to rise in her administration should bear the name of this great Saint, upon whose intercession she so confidently relied for the successful outcome of all her undertakings.

With every assurance from her kind benefactors that all would be done to further the interests of the proposed hospital, Mother Agnes returned to Philadelphia, encouraged by the results of her first official visit. It was not until the summer had almost passed that she received a message asking her to return to Baltimore.

Upon her arrival, she found that the enthusiasm of Father Clauss had, in the meantime, not abated, as he seemed most eager to hasten proceedings for the completion of the hospital; consequently, he asked the Sisters to be present in the church when he made the announcement about the collection of the money needed to complete and furnish the building. His exhortations were very forcible and aroused the people to great enthusiasm, so that their contributions were very liberal. The Reverend Father took upon himself the task of collecting, going from house to house and urging that each one should consider it a privilege to help in so worthy a cause; hence, it was largely due to the assistance and encouragement of this good Redemptorist Father that the hospital was speedily made ready for occupancy.

On September 25, 1864, Sisters Clara, Crescentia, and Scholastica, under the superiorship of Sister Walburga, were sent to prepare for the opening of the new institution. While awaiting the completion of alterations and the equipment of the building, the Sisters remained at the home of their good benefactress, Mrs. Eberhard, who continued her kindly services by assisting in making articles needed in the various parts of the house, and by encouraging others to lend a helping hand. Donations came from all sources; the rich gave liberally from their abundance and the poor likewise contributed their mite. The very first donation was that offered by a bright-faced lad who proudly brought a bag of coffee as his share in the glory of the good work. God alone knows the numberless little acts of generosity through which the opening of the institution was made possible.

St. Joseph's Hospital, as it stands today, with all evidences of having kept pace with modern progress, is a magnificent monument not only to the courage and perseverance of Mother Agnes in laboring for its establishment, but also to those who so nobly assisted in the task of collecting and promoting means for its continuance. In the sixty-five years of its existence, thousands have found it a place, not only where the miseries of the frail and diseased body are alleviated, but also where the soul is refreshed and strengthened to attain its true destiny.

In consideration of the countless deeds of charity and mercy which have been performed through the services of the devoted nurses and the noble staff of physicians at St. Joseph's Hospital, Mother Agnes' life would have been well spent had she established this one institution alone. But in her zeal, she foresaw various possibilities for service, and bent every energy to prepare the Sisters for engaging in other spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Among the first appeals for the services of the Community were those from zealous pastors who were eager to secure teachers for their parochial schools.

We have already seen how dear to the heart of Bishop Neumann was the work of education, and how truly marvelous was his success in securing the co-operation of the clergy in establishing institutions of learning in his diocese. By the mysterious gift of books which he had made the Sisters of St. Francis, we recall, too, that one aim he had in view in establishing the Community was that it should assist the pastors in the work of instructing the children in the various parishes.

Of the five schools accepted during the superiorship of Mother Francis, only St. Alphonsus' still remained under the supervision of the Philadelphia Community. From the unhappy circumstances connected with the other four schools, one might be led to believe that it was not pleasing to God that the work of education should be continued. But Mother Agnes thought otherwise. She was too well aware of the value of Christian education to be baffled by former difficulties; and before the end of the first year of her administration, we find her accepting a school mission at Bridesburg, Pa., at the request of the Reverend Mathias Meurer.

Sister Aloysia was sent as superior of the mission and with her were associated Sister Seraphine and a postulant. The poverty of the place was extreme, and the accommodations provided for the Sisters were consequently not very desirable, as they did not even have a house of their own, but were obliged to live in the rectory for the first few months. Although they had scarcely the bare necessaries of life at times, they were happy to endure privations, as they were assured by the good pastor that they were accomplishing great good in the parish. The school which opened with only forty pupils, steadily increased in numbers, and has continued these many years to give evidences of the blessings that attended the great sacrifices of the pioneer Sisters in the work of education.

Early in the year 1868, Mother Agnes was urged to send Sisters to teach in the parish school at St. Mary's Church, Manayunk, Pa. As special tact was needed to cope with the difficulties attending the opening of new missions, Sister Aloysia was again called upon to assume the superiorship. Here great trials awaited the Sisters, one of which was the difficulty of attending Mass, as the Pastor, Father Kuntzer, had obtained a leave of absence for a year, and had engaged a substitute for Sundays only. The Sisters were, therefore, obliged to go a considerable distance to a neighboring church to attend Mass on week days, and suffered from the long, cold journey during the winter months. They were fortunate in having the Reverend Father Grundner as their confessor; for, guided by his wise counsel, they were encouraged to bear the great inconveniences and to continue their laborious task.

In the summer of the same year, the parish school of St. Joseph's Church, Lancaster, was opened under the superiorship of Sister Agatha, with whom were associated three other Sisters. The difficulty here was in controlling the children, for they had been unaccustomed to restraint, and were at first quite unmanageable. With patience and tact, however, the Sisters soon gained the good will of their pupils and order was secured.

By the opening of the year 1869, the Community had been sufficiently reinforced to enable Mother Agnes to accept three other school missions. The first of these was in St. Francis Parish, Trenton. Sister Hyacinth was sent to act as superior of the school and, at the same time, to prepare the way for the opening of a hospital which was under consideration at that time.

Evidently the powers of the lower regions were determined to prevent the great amount of good that the Sisters were to effect by the establishment of two institutions, and attempted by the "black art" of a sorcerer to harass the Community in order to induce them to give up the work in Trenton. But God was more powerful than all His enemies, for the infernal efforts of the evil spirits were set at naught. The pious undertakings continued and prospered beyond the most sanguine expectations.

A few months afterwards, the Community established another school in the Diocese of Harrisburg at the request of Reverend William Pieper of the Holy Trinity Church, Columbia, Pa. Of this mission, Sister Aloysia was assigned the superiorship,—a position which she held for twenty-two years.

Later in the year, the parish school at St. Mary's Church, York, Pa., was opened under the superiorship of Sister Jerome. The mission was begun in poverty, as the parish was the home of poor working people, who themselves had to struggle to earn a livelihood. But there was a decidedly Catholic spirit which led the people to co-operate with the Sisters in their work, and made their task a pleasant one.

In the beginning of the year 1870, the Community had schools in three dioceses; namely, Philadelphia, Newark, and Harrisburg. At the request of the Reverend Father Kelly, the Sisters extended their influence to the Diocese of Wilmington by taking charge of the parish school at St. Joseph's Church on the historic Brandywine. Here for many years until the Diocese of Wilmington had been separated from that of Philadelphia, the children had been taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Then for a time, the pastor, Reverend Father Walsh, employed lay teachers for the school; but at his death his successor, Reverend George Kelly, resolved, if possible, to obtain religious teachers to instruct the children. Mother Agnes gladly undertook the mission, and promptly sent three Sisters under the superiorship of Sister Walburga to open the school.

As the men of the parish were only poor employees of the duPont gun-powder mills, the attendance at school varied according to the condition of the powder market.

The life of the Sisters at this mission was an uncertain one, as we judge from the explosions that frequently occurred in the mills. "Sisters who taught in St. Joseph's many years ago," says a writer in the "Delmarva Catholic," "can still recall tragic scenes; can tell of blanched faces; of anguish depicted on the faces of the pupils at the first signal of danger; of the rush to the door of the classroom which no human power could stay, as each boy and girl visualized the mangled form of a beloved father or a big brother among the victims of the disaster."

Among those who at different times were in charge of St. Joseph's School, Sisters Hilaria and Hugolina are perhaps the "best known and best loved." Both have now passed to their eternal reward, but the good people of St. Joseph's still gratefully recall the memory of their loving and devoted service.

"St. Joseph's on the Brandywine was ever a spot dear to the heart of Mother Agnes. When wearied and worn with the duties of her high office, her greatest pleasure and recreation was to drive to Brandywine and spend a day or two 'close to nature' among the flowers she loved so well." So, too, her worthy successors in office have continued to regard with loving solicitude this little mission where devoted Sisters still pursue the tasks so nobly begun by the valiant pioneers, for the children of the poor working class.

As we take a brief retrospect of events during the first six years of Mother Agnes' administration, we shall certainly be convinced that Bishop Wood had not erred in his judgment that she possessed sufficient ability to reconstruct affairs of the Community. Carefully and prayerfully had she considered every step which had been taken to preserve the Institute intact. And gradually both the Sisters themselves, who at first feared to trust to her guidance, and others, who looked askance at Bishop Wood's choice for superior general, arrived at the conclusion that the Community was, indeed, under able leadership.

The Philadelphia Foundation of the Sisters of St. Francis was by no means destined to lose its identity, but after a brief period of adversity to come forth with greater vigor to spread its beneficent influence over the great nation which just then was emerging from its own struggle for existence. For the preservation of the union of states, God had raised up Abraham Lincoln. "Out of the hills of Kentucky He had quarried him," and empowered him with those capabilities that securely and unerringly led him to accomplish his mission. Awkward, homely, uneducated, and of lowly origin, least of all, he seemed likely to be preferred to the polished and educated statesmen of the day, who apparently would have been better fitted for the presidential office. But the exigency of the time demanded just those qualities which Abraham Lincoln possessed,—tenacity of purpose, patience, far-sightedness, earnestness, and above all, confidence in God. "I will find first for what *God* cares," said the great President, "then for that *I* will care and I will be one in that purpose with God." Most surely this great preserver of our union of states "reached the heights of power because he climbed with his hand clasping that of God."

The striking characteristics of this great American leader were strangely apparent in her whom God had raised up for the preservation of the Philadelphia Community of the Sisters of St. Francis. When we recall the circumstances of Mother Agnes' early training under heretical influence, and the unfavorable environment of her later years, and again, that she seemed incapable of assuming a position which would necessitate contact with the social and financial world with which she was unfamiliar, we must recognize that it was only by God's special providence that she was prepared for the particular work, which by co-operation with His grace, she brought to a successful issue. Like the great preserver of the Union, Mother Agnes, too, sought first for what *God* cared, then, one in purpose with Him, she went forth without hesitation, confidently and securely.

Within six years the Community showed great material prosperity. To the little band of nine professed Sisters had been added thirty-three others, among whom were resolute religious women capable of sacrificing themselves for the interests of the Community in the critical period of its existence.

Prominent among these was Sister Cleopha, who proved to be an able financier; and in her long career of nearly fifty years, proved to be one of Mother Agnes' most valuable assistants. In her office as general secretary, she remained at the mother house on Reed Street. Many can recall how as timid novices they dreaded to meet good Sister Cleopha, who seemed to have a particular aptitude for selecting for Mother Agnes those who were "to go out on a mission." Particularly were the fears increased when it was whispered about that recruits were being selected for the Far West. The last years of Sister Cleopha were in singular contrast to her early active life, as she was stricken with paralysis five years prior to her death. This rendered her a helpless cripple, and incapacitated her for continuing any of her former duties. Henceforth, her life was an apostolate of suffering, nobly borne, and no less meritorious, we may believe, for the welfare of the Community she served so long and faithfully.

While busied about the material interests of the Sisters, Mother

Agnes by no means neglected to provide for their spiritual advancement; consequently, she unfailingly made provisions for an annual retreat, when all distracting occupations were laid aside, as far as possible, in order to consider the interests of the soul. How Mother Agnes herself valued the blessed privilege of devoting these few days to renewing the spiritual forces may be gleaned from the following exhortations contained in a letter addressed to the Community: "My dear Sisters, your time of retreat is a most precious time for you. Use well every means of grace offered. Pray particularly to the Holy Ghost that He may enlighten your minds and strengthen your wills to live in conformity to your holy rules and to perform your duties as religious most scrupulously."

Until the year 1869, these annual retreats were held at St. Mary's Hospital, as there was ample room for the accommodation of the Sisters. But with the increasing number of patients, it finally became impossible to provide for the Community which was constantly increasing in numbers also. It was then decided that Manayunk would be a more suitable place for holding the retreats. Accordingly, in 1869, thirty-nine Sisters assembled there for the first time. The convent was indeed small, but the good superior was ingenious and pressed into service every available article of furniture, including chairs and school desks, to provide beds for the Sisters. But with all her resourcefulness, she was not able to provide for all; hence, some were obliged to sleep on the floor. This trifling inconvenience, however, did not disturb the fervor of the Sisters of those days, as they had learned well to rejoice when circumstances demanded that they should feel the effects of poverty. Refreshed in spirit, though certainly not in body, they emerged from the retreat to begin anew their labors on the various missions with greater regard for their holy vocation and with new resolve to be more faithful in the fulfillment of their duties.

The following year, the Sisters met for retreat in Manayunk for the last time. As the Community had increased considerably in numbers, the Sisters had to endure inconveniences which were really incompatible with their laborious lives. It was decided then that in the future, accommodations would be provided elsewhere. The erection of the new mother house near Glen Riddle was hastened so that the next retreat might be held there, but unforeseen delays made this impossible. The Sisters met again at St. Mary's for the last time. The venerable walls of the hospital had witnessed many scenes in the history of the Community, and it was with sincere regret that the Sisters realized that they were no longer to meet within its friendly portals where they had so often sought refreshment of spirit as well as relief from bodily ills. Henceforth, the annual retreats were held at the Convent of Our Lady of Angels which afforded ample room for the whole Community, and greater security for quiet, undisturbed meditation and prayer.

The splendid achievements of Mother Agnes during these first years of her administration attested her unbounded confidence in God "who feeds the birds of the air, and clothes the lilies of the field." Most humbly did Mother Agnes apply to herself the words of the great Apostle, "Of myself, I can do nothing." But most confidently could she add, "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me." Invariably had she in all her undertakings endeavored to seek first the Kingdom of God. And the multiplication of the benevolent works of the Community for the betterment of humanity, proclaims that her reward was exceedingly great.

CHAPTER 2

Convent of Our Lady of Angels

"Solemn and silent everywhere!
Nature with folded hands seems there."

As we turn the pages in the history of the Union gloriously reconstructed after the agitation of civil strife, we find, in 1870, that the country over which liberty spread her glorious wings was rapidly assuming its old-time appearance of peace and prosperity. The bitter feelings engendered by war were fast disappearing, and both North and South were slowly but surely adjusting themselves to changed conditions. Everywhere the boys in blue and the boys in gray were quietly pursuing their wonted tasks, and the emancipated slave sat more securely at his little cabin door strumming his old banjo.

Gradually, even the traces of devastating armies were fast disappearing, as Nature began to plant her bright-eyed blossoms on the fields once "watered by the tears of slaves" and drenched with the blood of heroes.

"There were domes of white blossoms where swelled the white tent;
There were plows in the track where the war-wagon went;
There were songs where they lifted up Rachel's lament."

The hum of the wheels of industry that everywhere greeted the ear; the throngs that flocked to the country, now a true refuge for the downtrodden of every race; the awakened interest in education and all the arts of peace,—all proclaimed a new era of prosperity which marked the beginning of a great future.

As we return to the story of the Philadelphia Foundation of the Sisters of St. Francis, we find, too, evidences of an awakened confidence among the little band that not long since had scarcely dared hope that their Institute would survive.

Gradually all doubts and fears as to the stability of the Institute were laid aside, as year after year new proofs were given of the vigorous life within the parent stem, which continually brought forth new branches, exemplified in the various missions which had been undertaken where blossomed the flowers of every virtue. With the return of peace and confidence within the Community, and the gradual expansion of the Order into three of the neighboring dioceses, the future of the Philadelphia Community was quite well assured.

The simple, unassuming lives of the Sisters, devotedly pursuing their tasks amid the inconveniences of poverty, inspired others to enter the ranks and to share in the harvest; so that on the feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis in 1870, the most imposing ceremony which the Community had yet witnessed took place. On that day eight novices were admitted to profession and fourteen were clothed with the holy habit of penance. This unmistakable evidence that the worth of the Institute was fast being recognized by the clergy, was a prominent factor in determining various improvements that were being considered to supply the needs of the rapidly increasing Community. One of the most urgent of these was a more commodious mother house, as St. Francis Convent on Reed Street had long since ceased to afford sufficient room for the assembling of the Sisters; neither was it longer a suitable place for the novices to acquire that spirit of recollection which is conducive to prayer and meditation, as the great city had crowded its numerous dwellings close up to the very convent doors.

Bishop Neumann himself had proposed, while the Community was still in its infancy, that a mother house should be established on the outskirts of Philadelphia near the diocesan seminary. But, as we have seen, his plans did not materialize, much to his regret. He sincerely hoped, however, that ere long he might find another location where his spiritual daughters might be trained more efficiently in the science of the saints. But his early death put an end to this laudable enterprise, as well as to many other projects for the welfare of the Institute. The good Bishop, nevertheless, was instrumental, though quite unconsciously, in securing a new site for the mother house.

The securing of a place for a preparatory seminary for the prospective clergy of the diocese had long been under consideration. In 1859, Bishop Neumann purchased for this purpose an old building near Glen Riddle. For many years a fashionable boarding school for young ladies had been conducted here under Episcopalian auspices. As the unsettled conditions of those turbulent days portended financial difficulties, parents began to withdraw their daughters from the institution in such large numbers that it became necessary from lack of patronage to close the academy; and the property was offered for sale. The building, as it stood then, presented an appearance of gentility, with its "pebble-dashed walls, columned porches, quaint old-fashioned rooms, from which one could step from deep windows into the sunlit walks without." Already its walls were illumined by the light which history shed upon them; for the chronicler tells us that almost a century before, Washington in one of his campaigns had sought rest for the night in the primitive building. Yes,

"Once, ah, once within these walls
One whom memory oft recalls
The Father of his country dwelt."

The surrounding grounds, too, had a story to tell; for

" . . . Yonder meadows broad and damp
The fires of the besieging camp
Encircled with a burning belt."

Here it was that Cornwallis encamped when pursuing Washington, who was maneuvering night and day to save Philadelphia from an attack by Howe. Washington, we recall, succeeded in reaching the Brandywine before he was overtaken by the British commander, and here suffered defeat in one of the memorable battles of the Revolution, in spite of numerous prodigies of valor performed by the noble patriot leaders.

When at last the old academy, remarkable for its many associations, passed into the possession of the Philadelphia diocese, another striking chapter was begun in its already interesting history. Every foundation stone of the old structure seems to have proclaimed its mission as an educational center, as one class of knowledge-seekers after another sought shelter within its classic walls. Contrasting scenes meet the eye, as each successive act in the drama of life passes before the view. The curtain rises for the last time on an unexpected scene, in which are enacted some of the most important parts in the history of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

It was during the second retreat at Manayunk that Mother Agnes learned from the Reverend Father Schoeffler that the old seminary was for sale. From the very first, she seems to have been impressed that it was just the place for a new mother house.

After her return to Philadelphia, she at once communicated with Bishop Wood in regard to the advisability of considering the purchase of the property, and received from His Lordship a reply in which the following objections were stated: "The first difficulty would be the daily Mass which you could not have unless a priest resided in the house. The second would be that the confessor of the Sisters, I suppose, would have to come from Philadelphia." His Lordship, however, advised her to visit the place and to weigh well the difficulties.

Mother Agnes was not easily discouraged; neither was she hasty in making her decisions. No doubt these very objections to securing a place so far from the city had come to her mind before they were proposed by the Bishop. But there were so many other advantages to be considered in having a place so retired, as well as so healthful, for her Sisters, that she was still hopeful that adjustments could be made that would warrant the purchase of the property. As the Bishop had advised her to visit the place, she decided to make a trip to Glen Riddle to ascertain the true condition of affairs.

Sister Aloysia, whose superior judgment and prudence were quite apparent to Mother Agnes, was the companion chosen for this journey, which was to have such momentous consequences for the future of the Order.

The little village of Glen Riddle, desolate and forlorn-looking even at the present day, surely had, fifty years ago, fewer attractions to gladden the heart of the stranger. The only excuse for its existence, then as now, seemed to be the combined railroad station and post office which brought into communication with the outside world the country people who lived in the near vicinity. Only the daily arrival of the train broke the silence round about; and even this tarried scarcely long enough to allow the occasional passengers to alight, before it sped on its way with a shrill, parting salute.

It was on a hot day in August that Mother Agnes and her companion first made the trip to Glen Riddle. They took an early morning train in order to return to the city before nightfall. On alighting from the train, they were surprised to find the station closed, and rather startled when they beheld on the door of the agent's house nearby, a sombre piece of crepe. It was not a very cheering scene, and some would say not a propitious one either. Be that as it may, the Sisters putting aside all fears as to the success of their mission, approached the agent, who had come out of his house, to inquire of him how to reach the seminary. The man appeared grief-stricken, and at once told them that the cause of his sorrow was the death of his daughter. As he was a Catholic, he did not hesitate to invite them to enter his home. The Sisters extended to the bereaved parents their sympathy and consoled them as best they could, and together they prayed for the deceased. Thus the beginning of their mission was marked by performing spiritual works of mercy. This at least was propitious and a fitting prelude to all the numerous works of mercy that were to follow on the realization of their project.

On inquiring about how to reach their destination, the Sisters were informed that it would be impossible to get a conveyance. There was, then, no alternative but to walk. So they set out resolutely on their journey over the hot, dusty hills. They had proceeded only a short distance, however, when they were overtaken by a man in a two-seated buggy. He stopped and asked them their destination; and finding they were going the same route as he, offered to take them the remainder of the way. They were very fortunate, indeed, to have found so charitably disposed a neighbor. Had they walked, they would not have reached their destination till much later; hence, there would have been but little time left for business affairs.

Having reached the seminary, they thanked their hospitable driver for his kindness, and were made glad by his offer to take them to the train again in the evening.

When they were admitted to the house, they learned from the woman who had answered their summons at the door, that the caretakers had gone out for the day on a picnic and would not return until late in the evening. As the woman who had been left in care of the place was only a servant, the Sisters could obtain very little information about the property. They were, however, permitted to inspect the house and surroundings, and were quite satisfied with their investigations. The place was very quiet and seemed quite deserted, on account of the exodus of the numerous workmen who were employed on the place. As it was midsummer, and the students had long since gone on their vacation, the cessation of the usual activities of schoolboy life was another factor that accounted for the stillness. As a matter of fact, the days of the Little Seminary at Glen Riddle were over. The venerable walls of the old building would no longer resound with the happy voices of aspiring young Levites, who henceforth were to continue their preparations for the priesthood in the new and more commodious institution at Overbrook.

Mother Agnes and her companion did not fail to recognize in a short time that the surroundings promised great possibilities for the future. They were attracted both by the beauty of the country which lay beyond in great green folds, as well as by the productiveness of the soil, which was evident in the rich harvest that was waiting to be gathered in.

That many improvements would have to be made in the building and its surroundings to make the place suitable for its new purpose, the Sisters realized; but even with this consideration, they believed it would be advisable to purchase the property as soon as possible, as no doubt other prospective buyers were also considering its desirability for other purposes.

Well pleased with the prospects, the Sisters returned late in the afternoon to the station at Glen Riddle, where their newly-found friends of the morning were awaiting their return. The kindly wife of the ticket agent had prepared for them a light lunch of which they gratefully partook before resuming their journey to the city.

It had been a blessed day. The hospitality of the good people at the station, the kindly-disposed driver who had offered them his services, the courtesy they had received at the seminary,—all had contributed to make their journey a happy one. With fervent prayers for their kind benefactors, they returned to Philadelphia, grateful to God for His merciful care during the day, and convinced that they had found the place which was to become the future mother house of the Order.

When Mother Agnes made known to the Reverend Father

1. SHRINE OF
OUR LADY OF GLEN RIDDLE

2. CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF
ANGELS (1871)
"THE LITTLE SEMINARY"
GLEN RIDDLE, PA.

3. A QUIET WALK

Grundner that both she and Sister Aloysia were in favor of buying the property at Glen Riddle, he advised them to conclude the sale at once, provided that the Right Reverend Bishop would indorse the plan. The consent of His Lordship was readily obtained, as he was confident that Mother Agnes had considered well the difficulties which he had proposed, and would not expose the Sisters to conditions that would be detrimental to their spiritual advancement.

As there was no reason for further delay, the sale was concluded September 11, 1871, by which the property passed into the hands of the Sisters of St. Francis for the sum of $12,000. Fortunately, there were included in the sale of the house, barn, and grounds, much of the chapel furniture, school desks, a wagon, a buggy, a horse, and a cow. The Community was, therefore, in a position to begin life in the country with no small number of possessions, which would, in a short time, make it self-supporting.

The Sisters were also fortunate in retaining in their employ Mr. John Moran, who had for some years successfully superintended the orchard and vegetable garden. The work on the farm, consequently, could go on without interruption.

By the acquisition of this new property, another immense debt was contracted. Mother Agnes believed, however, that it was justified; and in her simple faith in the goodness of God, hoped that He would send generous benefactors who would contribute sufficiently to enable her to make the required payments.

Confidence in Divine Providence is a virtue which seems particularly required of those who are entrusted with the executive power in a religious community. For them there is no Ways and Means Committee upon whom to shift the responsibility of providing funds needed to meet expenses. Shrewd as they may be in dealing with financial problems, there are many occasions when they must cry out, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" And their cry of confidence is never unheeded, but often answered as mysteriously as was that of the Apostle for whom was miraculously provided the tribute money demanded by Cæsar.

The Sisters rejoiced at the prospects of having a new home in the country; and there was no delay in preparing to remove thither as soon as possible. Mother Agnes realized when she saw the house the first time that it would be necessary to renovate it thoroughly before it could be occupied. As it was known for some time that the building was to be vacated by the students, no money had been expended for repairs; and as the building had already done nearly a century's service, the "ravages of time" were everywhere evident. But Mother Agnes was not discouraged at the outlook; for she was not unaware that wonders could be performed by a few willing hands in a short time with the aid of paint, wall paper, and scrubbing brushes.

For the purpose of preparing the house for occupancy, Sisters Eusebia, Christina, Appolonia, Helena, and a postulant went forth on September twenty-fifth with great hopes of accomplishing their task before the cold weather set in. Day after day, they scrubbed and scoured and polished; and with the help of Mr. Moran and other workmen they soon had the place transformed.

As the furniture which had been ordered did not arrive for some time, the Sisters were obliged to take their rest at night on the floor. In addition to this discomfort, they were terrorized by the numerous rats and mice that infested the house, and held nightly revelry around them. The Sisters were young, however, and had inured themselves already to hardships, so that these were only trifling annoyances which they gladly endured. Often, in after years, these pioneer Sisters would recall the many incidents of their first housecleaning in Glen Riddle which, although rather stern experiences then, seemed as time passed to take on the semblance of the ludicrous. All lived to see the old building replaced by the present capacious stone structure, which with all its modern conveniences bears no resemblance to the pebble-dashed building of the long-ago. Of that sturdy little band of Sisters, Sister Christina alone survives. Hale and hearty after nearly sixty years of service, she is still at her post on the "old camping ground," and has become through long association, almost a part of the institution itself.

It was a happy day for the Sisters of St. Francis Convent when it was announced that alterations at the new mother house in the country were completed, and that it was ready for occupancy. Those who were appointed to go thither were not long in making ready for the removal, as their rigid observance of poverty had prevented any accumulation of possessions other than the barest necessaries of life. Their arrival at the convent in Glen Riddle meant that other willing hands were ready for assisting in the work of making further changes in the surroundings. Trees and shrubs were planted; walks were made; fences were repaired; the yard was cleaned and beautified with grass plots and flower beds, and many other little touches were added so that in a short time the place became a garden of delight.

The chapel that had been used in seminary days was furnished as well as the Sisters' state of poverty permitted. The Blessed Sacrament was kept there, although the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass could not be offered in the house as there was no possibility of having a resident chaplain; hence, the Sisters had to walk to Ivy Mills, several miles distant, to hear Mass. This they did usually four times a week, at the cost of no little discomfort, as the roads were in a poor condition, and the weather often cold and inclement.

How ardent was the faith, how admirable the zeal of these resolute women, who trudged through the snow over the unbeaten road often in the face of icy blasts, at an early morning hour when their neighbors had not yet awakened from their slumbers!

When all was in readiness, Father Grundner was informed and invited to perform the ceremony of blessing the house. Very appropriately, the new mother house was dedicated to Our Lady of Angels, in memory of the first nursery of the children of St. Francis in faraway Italy. How many sacred memories the name would recall! How insignificant had been the labor of repairing the old seminary in comparison with that which the humble Francis had performed in restoring the dilapidated walls of the old field chapel, the present world shrine of Our Lady of Angels!

The primitive days of the Community in their new country home were very happy ones. But no one was more delighted with the surroundings than Mother Agnes whose natural love of the beautiful led her to note every leaf and bud and flower. In her own native land, she had learned to appreciate the wonders of creation as revealed in the majestic Alps with their glistening white summits and their steep slopes wooded with shrub and vine trustfully clinging for support; and with the passing years, the realization of "God's presence among His creatures," enhanced for her every natural beauty.

Like St. Francis, Mother Agnes regarded every perfection as but a reflection of the Eternal Goodness,—an emanation of the indwelling life, a visible token of the upholding Love, expressed by Moore in his beautiful lines,

> "Thou art, O God, the life and light
> Of all this wondrous world we see;
> Its glow by day, its smile by night
> Are but reflections caught from Thee."

There was no phase of nature that failed to attract Mother Agnes and excite her admiration. She loved the birds, the bees, the flowers. Over dumb animals she seemed to share some of the dominion exercised by the Saint of Assisi. Many of the Sisters will recall with what readiness the animals on the farm recognized Mother's voice and would come at her call. Even the fiercest watch dogs at a word of command from her would crouch at her feet. In the last few months of her life, a little kitten which would have been regarded as an unwelcome intruder by most holy religious, regaled itself daily from morsels which its importunate meows coaxed from Mother Agnes' table. If the little creature found the door closed it would go to the porch window, and was always sure of admittance and of a welcome as hearty as that which St. Francis gave his little rabbit at Greccio.

St. Francis, we are told, had at various times several pet lambs, one of which followed him everywhere, even into church, where its bleatings were mingled with the songs of the brethren. There was also a privileged tame lamb at the convent in Glen Riddle, which afforded the Sisters much amusement at recreation, and like St. Francis' lamb went to chapel too. The Sisters, however, did not all agree that the dear little creature belonged in the holy house of God; and consequently, unlike St. Francis' lamb, it was not allowed to remain, but was led out in spite of all its bleating protestations.

Another familiar sight around the convent grounds at Glen Riddle was a donkey. With all his goodness, he had one bad trait which caused grief to many an unwary Sister who left clothing on the line within his reach. On one particular occasion, a Sister relates that she had placed a night cap out to bleach; and when, at the end of the day, she went out to get her nice white cap, she found the donkey had devoured the very last shred, and stood demurely looking up at the line for another.

Nor must we forget to mention, too, a particularly fine-plumaged parrot that was quite as much at home in Glen Riddle as St. Francis' falcon was in his little hut at Mt. Alverno. How often was Polly wont to break the silence by his smart, well-rehearsed sayings, and thus disturb the pious reflections of the novices, who were often tempted to teach him something new!

Another very interesting little creature at Glen Riddle was Finny, a little dog, which for his valuable services surely deserves a eulogy. He was not handsome, nor did he have any particularly winning quality, except his devotion to Mother Agnes. Of all the canine family, Finny was the one privileged to sleep in the house. Close by the door just outside Mother Agnes' room was the place where he always lay, curled up like a little ball. He was very small and apparently would have been powerless to defend anyone. But he had a ferocious bark and could at least sound an alarm when danger was near. One night, long after everybody in the house had retired, Sister Eusebia was awakened by Finny barking furiously and running back and forth in the corridor. She arose immediately, and when she opened the door, the little dog ran to her, then to Mother Agnes' door where he stopped and barked all the more frantically. Thinking something must have happened, Sister went to Mother Agnes' room and on opening the door smelled gas which was escaping from the coal stove. Before her on the bed lay Mother Agnes quite motionless. She had inhaled too much of the deadly poisonous gas and could not be aroused. Mr. Moran, the workman, was hastily summoned to go to Glen Riddle for the doctor. It was a cold, dark winter night and the roads were blocked with snow. Mr. Moran had gone but half the way when he had a breakdown and was considerably delayed in reaching the village. When he returned to the convent with the doctor, the Sisters had quite despaired of Mother Agnes' recovery, as there was no sign of returning consciousness. But with the good doctor's skillful treatment, the dear patient was finally resuscitated.

Little Finny, however, was looked upon as the hero of the hour, and got many a pat on his little red head for scenting the danger and sounding the timely alarm.

There would be much to relate, should we attempt to mention all of Mother Agnes' pets. Like the pious nature-loving poet she could say most sincerely,

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us
He made and loveth all."

Alterations and improvements were continued throughout the first year's residence at Glen Riddle, so that by the summer of 1872, sufficient accommodations had been provided to have the annual retreat held at the new mother house. This was a glad surprise to the Sisters, as they were eagerly awaiting an opportunity to visit their new country home.

Mother Agnes spared no pains in making the surroundings attractive and homelike. The Convent of Our Lady of Angels was then, as it is now, an ideal place for retreat. Situated as it is in a sunlit, green hill-country, far from the crowded city "murky with the smoke of a thousand industries," and set in a circuit of shady lawns bejeweled with bright flowers, it affords abundant means for raising the heart to God. Here is no sound of clanging trolley car, that ubiquitous invader of peace, from which rural districts are not always happily free; here no noisy vender announces his wares. To these disturbing sounds, the quiet tinkle of the herd bell in the nearby fields, and the sweet notes of God's little songsters, "piping on the tangled hillsides," prove a pleasing contrast.

This memorable retreat at Our Lady of Angels was conducted by the Reverend Father Schoeffler, from whom Mother Agnes had first learned that the property at Glen Riddle was for sale. Thus we see that the Redemptorist Fathers were to be prominent, not only in the inception and early guardianship of the Community, but in its subsequent history as well.

At each annual home-coming of the Sisters for their spiritual retreat, they found some new improvement had been made at the mother house to add to their comfort and happiness. The beautifying of the grounds was particularly a work in which Mother

Agnes took great delight; and during all the years she remained in office, she always found time, not only to plan and superintend these various improvements, but also to take an active part in the actual work itself. It was no unusual sight to behold Mother wielding the various garden implements with a skill and endurance equal to that of the best workman. The flowers and vegetables seemed to spring up almost magically where her spade and hoe had prepared the soil. In this work she seemed to find rest and relaxation from the many cares attendant upon her official duties, which necessitated her presence in the city. Like St. Francis, who hastened back to his dear little Portiuncula, his bridal home of Holy Poverty, to refresh his soul after distracting contact with the world, Mother Agnes, too, rejoiced when in the interim between the visitation of the various missions, she could return to the quiet country home at Our Lady of Angels.

In a few years another urgent need called for more extensive accommodations for the rapidly increasing number of novices. On account of the lack of funds, no definite consideration could be made until, in 1885, Reverend Father Stephan of the Catholic Indian Bureau and Miss Katherine Drexel, now Mother Katherine, paid a visit to the Convent of Our Lady of Angels. Mother Agnes took advantage of the opportunity to explain the various needs of the Community, and found Miss Drexel most eager to give material assistance, as her father had done on various occasions. It was not until 1887, however, that Mother Agnes decided definitely to erect a new building for the novitiate. A magnificent gift of $10,000 from Miss Drexel gave great security in beginning the work. And by the year 1891, the structure was completed. The imposing gray stone building which has for nearly forty years been the cherished novitiate home of St. Francis' numerous children, stands as a magnificent memorial to the generosity of the humble benefactress through whose munificence it was largely made possible.

Simultaneous with the construction of the novitiate was the erection of a substantial home for the professed Sisters on the grounds adjoining the chapel.

At the opening of the new century, as the large numbers who came to the mother house for retreat and other ceremonies could no longer be provided for conveniently, it was decided to erect a large stone structure on the site of the old seminary building. This necessitated the demolition of the Little Seminary, which from its century of service was fast becoming sadly dilapidated.

The day appointed for the exodus from the old building was the feast of the Presentation in 1900. The departure was marked by farewell ceremonies. Mother Agnes, not unmindful of the many graces that had been there received, lighted candles before the shrine of St. Anthony; and, with the assembled Community, offered fervent prayers of thanksgiving for God's merciful care of the Sisters who had long cherished the venerable building as their cloistral home. The Sisters then removed to the novitiate where they remained until the new structure was completed.

Soon the work of demolition on the old building began. Daily the Sisters beheld one portion after another disappearing under the destroying sledge, until nothing remained but the old sacristy, whose preservation had been decreed as a memorial of bygone days. This, now deprived of its former dignity, stands in all its loneliness apart from its modern architectural rivals; and, with the addition of repairs, is still continuing its mission of usefulness in the humble capacity of workshop for the convent carpenter.

The winter of 1900 was a memorable one for those who were at the mother house. During the first part of the year, the weather was so mild that after a thunderstorm on February thirteenth a magnificent rainbow spanned the heavens for fully fifteen minutes. This seemed only to presage a change. It grew cold and stormy. The passage to and from the chapel was very difficult at times on account of the deep snow and slippery paths. As the signal for beginning morning prayer was given only twenty minutes after the bell for rising sounded, there was no small number of even the most punctual who were chagrined at being unable to reach the chapel on time. In these early morning slides the novices found it no easy task to restrain their buoyant spirits and to observe the great silence, which was enjoined upon them at that holy morning hour, when they beheld one after the other of their companions obliged to dispense with the ordinary observances of religious gravity.

To the reflective novice, the destruction of the old convent which she witnessed from day to day, was suggestive of the tearing down process which must take place in her own soul, before the building up of a strong spiritual edifice would be possible. As she beheld the workmen busily engaged in chiseling the stones, she realized, too, how she must submit to the chisel of mortification and humiliation which was to prepare her for the place which God had destined for her in the Community.

The work on the new building progressed rapidly, and the time for its completion was eagerly anticipated. There was one incident, however, that caused sad memories to be associated with its construction. Death had to claim its toll in the loss of Mr. Kavanaugh, the contractor, who dropped dead suddenly on returning home from one of his trips to Glen Riddle. There was no indication of illness when he left the convent grounds; for, after taking luncheon which the Sisters had prepared for him, he chatted pleasantly with the workmen and then left for the station at Glen Riddle. On the way the horse shied; and when the driver found that one of the lines needed repairing, Mr. Kavanaugh stepped from the carriage and went across the road where the road overseer was working with several men. Referring to the present escape, he told the road master that once he had a narrow escape from death when lightning struck a tree under which he had been standing a moment before. He had scarcely finished, when he fell to the ground dead before the eyes of the very men who were listening to his narrative.

As not more than fifteen minutes had elapsed since he was talking to Mother Agnes, his death caused great consternation at the mother house. It was a terrible shock to the Community, but still greater to his good wife who was in Philadelphia awaiting his return.

Work on the building was abandoned for some time, as a new contract had to be made. This was finally given to Mr. Murphy, a nephew of the deceased contractor. Not until the year 1903 was the building completed. It was then blessed by Archbishop Ryan.

Notwithstanding the fact that accommodations had been continually made from time to time for the rapidly increasing Community, there was still a pressing necessity for more classrooms, as the number attending summer school was growing larger from year to year. This difficulty was eliminated by the foresight of Reverend Mother Kilian, who provided for the building of a hall across from the novitiate at the edge of the woods. This has been dignified by the name, The Josephinum. Here amidst Nature's charming sylvan scenes, the Sisters, who for the most part have been accustomed during the school year to the tumult of city life, may enjoy that quiet seclusion which is so conducive to study.

CHAPTER 3

The New Chapel at the Mother House

"I have loved the beauty of Thy House, O God, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."

TRADITIONAL among the children of St. Francis is a love and veneration for the august Sacrament of the altar, which inspires them to provide as magnificently as possible for the Divine Guest who resides in their midst.

One of the first evidences of the great transformation of the worldly son of Peter Bernardone had been a zeal for God's house which he manifested by repairing abandoned chapels and by adorning the tabernacles of the Lord. It was in the little, half-ruined chapel of San Damiano, which Francis later repaired, that God first spoke clearly to the heart of His future apostle; it was in the old restored field chapel of the Portiuncula that the Lord spread out more clearly before Francis' vision the secrets of the remarkable vocation which was to result in the establishment and the propagation of the great Franciscan Order. This interest in securing a becoming habitation for the Eucharistic Lord was characteristic of Francis of Assisi during all the remainder of his life; and this same spirit has been transmitted to his spiritual children. Although the dwelling of those who observe holy poverty in an eminent degree may be poor and unadorned, there is one place where no expenditure is spared in ornamenting and making beautiful, and that is the community chapel.

When the Sisters of St. Francis at the new mother house realized that the little chapel was quite inadequate to have the various ceremonies of retreat, investing and profession carried on conveniently, plans were formulated to secure a new and more commodious chapel. This, it was realized, would have to be a separate building, as the Community at that time gave promise of being continually augmented from year to year.

There was no difficulty in obtaining permission from the Right Reverend Bishop, as his officiating at the various ceremonies had convinced him of the crowded conditions. So enthusiastic and interested was His Lordship, that he asked that he himself might have the privilege of selecting the location and of determining the dimensions of the proposed chapel. The Sisters were very grateful for the kind co-operation of the good Bishop, and gladly welcomed his visit to the mother house to view the grounds and to make final arrangements about the new building. After considerable deliberation, it was decided to erect the chapel on the ground where the stable then stood. Another place for the farm animals was provided for by purchasing the Sinex Estate which was opposite the old seminary. The purchase was made in January, 1874, for the sum of $5,800. Preparations were at once begun for the erection of a substantial barn and stable. On account of unavoidable delays, the buildings were not completed until three years later. The cattle and poultry were then removed to the new quarters. The old stable and other buildings were soon torn down, and the ground was cleared and prepared for beginning the new chapel.

One would naturally question the advisability of choosing such a site for the new chapel, as it necessitated so much extra expense and labor; and it seemed not altogether appropriate that the house of God should be built upon a place which had been occupied for years by farm animals. Viewed in another light, it seems quite proper that the Savior of the world, whose first earthly abode had been the stable of Bethlehem, should find repose again where His lowly creatures had long found shelter. By the happy dispensation of Divine Providence, tradition tells us, the Heaven-favored son of Peter Bernardone, like the Savior of the world, was also cradled in a manger of an old stable. These considerations, then, would throw a hallowed light over the site which would suggest sacred memories in the life of Jesus and the lowly Saint of Assisi.

From the viewpoint of the present, Bishop Wood's decision in regard to the location of the chapel seems very providential, as it resulted in the purchase of more land upon which other needed buildings were erected. It also made possible that the Community should continue self-supporting through the additional farm products that could be supplied.

In the summer of 1878, the Sisters were rejoiced to see the workmen actually engaged in removing the earth for the foundation of the chapel. By the Feast of St. Francis, sufficient had been done to begin putting the stones in place. On this memorable day, Mother Agnes and the Sisters themselves carried the first stones from the quarry below the convent. Day after day they continued their task, with a zeal no less ardent than that which the newly-converted son of Peter Bernardone had displayed in building up the sanctuaries of the Lord around Assisi.

As the Sisters saw the work progressing, how well they felt repaid for the fatiguing labor of bending beneath the weight of the heavy stones which they carried for the foundation! In May, 1879, they had the happiness of seeing it so far completed as to permit the laying of the corner stone. Right Reverend Bishop Wood officiated on this occasion which was indeed a festive day for the mother house.

By the Feast of St. Francis of the following year, work had progressed so rapidly that it was possible, by submitting to numerous inconveniences, to have the ceremony of investiture and profession held in the new chapel. The golden jubilarians of today recall with joy that memorable occasion. Of those who were on that day espoused to Christ, only seven remain. Of that happy band, Mother Nothburga has, in her long career, rendered valuable service to the Community through her position as local superior, as provincial of the Eastern Province, and in her present position as vicar-general. Her gracious and winning personality, her sympathetic and kindly nature have won for her the confidence and affection of all who come within her motherly influence.

Sister Tabitha, a most lovable and gentle character, in her many years of service at the mother house superintending the work in the garden and greenhouse, has assisted in the great transformation which has made the old seminary grounds a beautiful verdant garden. Of the Brother Giles type of innocence and simplicity, Sister is regarded as one of the most charming characters among the Sisters of St. Francis.

Sister Immaculate, after a long period of superiorship in the Far West, was called to the provincialship of the Eastern Province. Efficient service rendered in this position resulted in her election as vicar-general of the Community. Later as local superior of various missions, Sister Immaculate labored zealously for the interests of the Order, and in the summer of 1929 through her appointment as provincial of the Western Province returned to the far West to resume her labors for the welfare of the missions in whose progress during her long absence she had always remained sincerely interested.

Sister Charity, after many years of devoted service among the orphans of the West, was stricken with paralysis, and for four years has endured her painful and helpless condition with unalterable serenity.

Of the remaining three, Sisters Judith, Rebecca, and Salome, each has generously borne her share in various labors that have contributed to the upbuilding of the Community which today places upon their brow the well-earned golden crown.

Among the twenty-two postulants who on that day were clothed with the holy habit of St. Francis, there was one youthful aspirant whose rare qualities of heart and mind were soon manifested. This was Sister Mary Kilian, the present beloved mother general, whose capabilities were tested by long service on the far Western missions, where, as local superior and later as provincial of the Western Province, she was identified with the progress of the Order for more than thirty years.

The investing and profession of that far off day fifty years ago was a never-to-be-forgotten one. The interior of the new building was far from being completed. In place of windows there was muslin stretched across the openings; and as there were no pews, chairs were borrowed from Rockdale Hall for the occasion. Over the rough boards of the scaffolding which could not yet be removed, boughs of cedar and spruce were placed as a little suggestion of ornament. A temporary altar constructed of rough lumber was neatly covered with white muslin. It was a breezy day in October, and the wind whistling through the openings was quite a distraction to those who were present at the ceremonies.

Right Reverend Bishop Wood, who presided at the religious function, does not seem to have been disconcerted at the inconveniences of the surroundings. In a letter received by Mother Agnes a few days afterwards he writes as follows:

MY DEAR CHILD:

I shall not attempt to tell you how much consolation and joy I experienced in my visit to Mt. Alverno. I was much edified at the novices and postulants whom you presented for admission. . . . Our holy Father St. Francis no doubt did his part in praying for us all, and no doubt to his powerful and affectionate intercession we owe our success in all we have attempted and achieved for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Let us beg him to enable us to imitate his poverty, patience, humility, obedience, and inexhaustible charity in word and work, that we may be made worthy partakers of his immense glory and eternal happiness in the kingdom of Heaven. Amen! Amen! Amen!

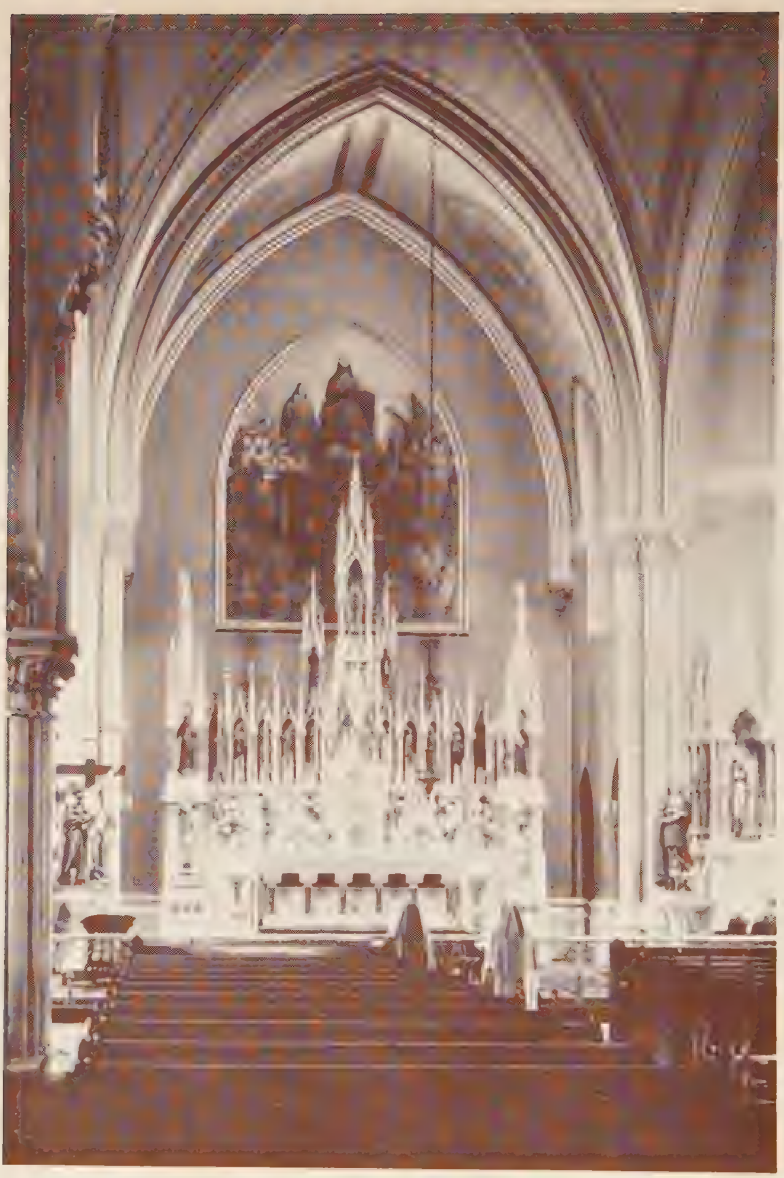
With a copious blessing for all, believe me very sincerely and affectionately, the most obedient servant and loving father in Christ of all,

✠ JAMES F. WOOD,
Archbishop of Philadelphia.

It may be surprising to our readers to note that His Lordship speaks of the convent as being at Mt. Alverno rather than at Glen Riddle, which is the name now used to designate its location. Sixty years ago, there were several trains daily between Philadelphia and the little station which then bore the name of Presbyterian Ford. But gradually travel to this point decreased as other villages more conveniently located sprang up; and it was no longer found profitable for the railroad company to provide such ample train service, as Glen Riddle was sufficiently near to accommodate the passengers of the surrounding country. As Presbyterian Ford was within easy walking distance from the convent, it was the usual stopping place for those whose destination was Our Lady of Angels. Through an incident connected with one of Bishop Wood's visits to the convent, the inappropriate name of the station was changed to one more in keeping with its association with a religious Community. It was in the month of August, 1878, that His Lordship decided to visit the mother house on business that demanded his presence there. Accordingly he wrote to Mother Agnes informing her of the time of his proposed visit, and directed the letter to Presbyterian Ford. Unfortunately, it did not reach its destination at the proper time.

On the day which he had appointed for his visit, Bishop went as usual to Presbyterian Ford, but on his arrival found no one to meet him. A farmer who was at the station, having recognized the Bishop, kindly offered to convey him to the convent. As it was a hot summer day, His Lordship gladly accepted the invitation, for the prospect of a ride was more pleasing than that of walking over the dusty road. When they reached the convent, we can well imagine the surprise of the good chaplain and the Sisters when they beheld their dignified Bishop alighting from the big wagon and taking leave of the farmer. Explanations soon revealed the fact that the Bishop's letter had not been received; and the cause of the unpleasant situation was properly assigned to delayed distribution of mail. Then and there, it was determined that Presbyterian Ford was no name by which to designate the location of a Sisters' convent; and measures were at once suggested by which the objectionable name was finally changed to Mt. Alverno. The village then became more important through association with Our Lady of Angels. But conditions have robbed this one-time flourishing village of what little glory it could boast, and now it lives on dreamily remembering its more prosperous past.

On account of our little digression about Presbyterian Ford, we have turned the attention of our readers from the new chapel at the mother house. The work progressed rapidly; and soon the finishing of the interior necessitated another set of workmen. There had been no attempt at ornamentation of the exterior building, which is of gray stone and a good model of the Gothic style of architecture. Like the King's daughters, its real beauty is from within; for no expense or labor has been spared on the interior ornamentation. Here again the Gothic is closely adhered to in the beautifully decorated columns and arches which divide the nave into three sections, and in the numerous niches, finials and pinnacles which, here and there, heighten the artistic effect. The main altar is of white marble, supported by columns of red granite and partly covered with onyx. Pinnacled arches are supported by slender columns and from seventeen niches peer forth the familiar forms of



INTERIOR OF THE CHAPEL
CONVENT OF OUR LADY OF ANGELS

various saints dear to the Franciscan heart. The Twelve Apostles, St. Francis, and St. Anthony are prominently placed, as if to form a guard of honor for the Eucharistic King. Towering above all, is a statue of the Queen of Heaven, which terminates the superstructure of the main altar. To the right is a beautiful marble altar dedicated to St. Joseph, and beyond this is a shrine of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. To the left is another marble altar where Our Lady of Perpetual Help looks down upon her suppliant children. To the left of this is a shrine dedicated to the Sacred Heart.

On entering the chapel, the attention is at once directed to a magnificent picture which hangs over the high altar. It is a beautiful representation of St. Francis and his vision at the Portiuncula. The picture was the gift of the Right Reverend Bishop Wood. It had stood on one of the side altars of the cathedral for several years, but His Lordship, thinking it would be very appropriate for the Sisters' new chapel, had it cut off considerably to correspond with the Gothic arches, and had it put in place in time for the dedication ceremonies.

Within the last fifty years the chapel has undergone many alterations and repairs. One of the most recent additions is that of an exquisitely designed altar rail of brass and marble, which replaces the old carved walnut railing. A linotyle floor has also been laid which is a marked improvement on the board floor which required so much labor to keep it presentable. In our description of the chapel, we must not omit to mention the bells which have had a prominent duty to perform in summoning the community to the various exercises of the day.

The office of a convent bell is an authoritative one, as religious are taught to obey promptly its very first summons, even to the point of leaving unfinished the forming of a letter that would complete a word. To the children of St. Francis, bells recall the fact that through the suggestion of the illustrious Friar Minor, St. Bonaventure, a special devotion was inaugurated in the Church; namely, the Angelus,—"that poetic appeal to Mary resounding from belfry to belfry to gladden the heart of the peasant at the plough and the traveler by the wayside."

It is interesting to learn that each bell at Our Lady of Angels has a history of its own. The oldest of these, which now hangs in a small belfry near the chapel, was originally brought from Mexico; evidently, it could tell a long story not only of its travels, but also of its various duties. The first we know of its history in America was its purchase in Reading by the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann, who had it taken to Glen Riddle to call out the various exercises in the daily life of the young seminarians.

The first bell in the chapel tower was blessed by Reverend Father Wirth, and dedicated to St. Catherine. In 1905, Father Stommel had two bells made out of one of the large ones at St. Alphonsus Church and presented them to the Sisters for use at the mother house. They were blessed by the Right Reverend Bishop Prendergast, and dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and to St. Agnes respectively.

During the same year, a large clock was placed in the tower of the chapel. Faithfully has it continued its mission of announcing the hours and half hours, and in so doing has assisted in arresting the wandering imagination and in directing the heart to God.

Almost everything connected with the chapel has been donated by generous friends of the Sisters. With the lapse of time, the names of many of these benefactors have been forgotten, or indeed, mayhap the donor humbly withheld his identity, in order to avoid a worldly display in giving. Nevertheless, the Community gratefully remembers all its benefactors and prays most earnestly for their temporal and their eternal welfare.

As we view the surroundings at the mother house today, we note that mere material beauty alone was not sought in adorning the grounds; the spiritual was likewise provided for in the erection of shrines, which increase devotion and assist in keeping the mind recollected even in the midst of labor and recreation.

The first of these little devotional stopping places is that known as Our Lady of Glen Riddle, prominently situated near the convent in the midst of a little garden of its own, surrounded by a circular hedge of boxwood. Within, grow hundreds of sweet-scented lilies-of-the-valley, which offer up each recurring spring their sweet fragrance as a pleasing incense to Heaven's Queen. Aside from its claim to seniority, this little shrine seems doubly sacred as having been first cherished by the young seminarians, the flower of Catholic manhood, who later, as holy priests of God, devoted their lives to

GROTTO OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

the upbuilding of the Church in the vast Diocese of Philadelphia. How often in the years gone by, these nobly aspiring youths hastened to our Blessed Lady, and there sought light and guidance in their doubts and perplexities! How many triumphs, indeed, could the benign Mother not recount of those who trusted all to her maternal care!

Another of the older shrines is that on the lower grounds where we find a rather weather-beaten statue of Our Blessed Lady which has resisted the storms of years. It, too, has witnessed many a conquest of those who have knelt with confidence at the feet of the Queen of Peace.

As we follow the circular walk to the right leading from the novitiate to the shady lawn below, we find a little chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Dolors. Within, on a small altar, stands the touching representation of our Lord in the arms of His Blessed Mother after the terrible agony of His sufferings was over. As devotion to the Mater Dolorosa is a favorite one among the Sisters of St. Francis, this shrine is regarded with particular veneration. The special care of the chapel is entrusted to the novices who regard their charge as a privilege, and perform their task with love and devotion in gratitude to her who offered herself to be the mother of the world's Redeemer.

By far the most prominent and the most beautifully adorned of all the memorials erected in honor of Our Blessed Lady, is the Grotto, just below the chapel along the path leading to the convent garden.

To the beneficence of Reverend Thomas McCarthy of St. Edward's Church, Philadelphia, the Sisters owe this beautiful shrine. Its generous donor spared no pains in making it as nearly as possible an exact reproduction of the great world shrine where Our Blessed Mother's power is so particularly manifested as to make it "an arena where science and the supernatural cross swords." While traveling in France, Father McCarthy purchased a statue of Our Lady which he sent to Lourdes to be kept over night. Thence it was sent to the convent in Glen Riddle where it was placed under a canopy of stones prepared for it and surrounded by choice plants and shrubs which enhance its beauty. Amid clusters of ferns, the sweet-faced child-saint, Bernadette, kneeling suppliantly at the feet of Heaven's Queen, reminds us of the beautiful story of the little shepherdess, the heroine of the great drama of "heavenly plan and performance," which was to bring multitudes of every tribe and tongue in grand procession to honor the Immaculate Mother.

The replica of the modern Pool of Bethsaida would not be complete without a suggestion of the healing waters which sprang up miraculously at the touch of the little peasant saint; hence, clear spring water passing through a pipe in which is placed a small stone brought from Lourdes, bubbles forth into a small fountain, projecting from a mass of foliage.

Just outside the grotto is an altar of fine, polished granite, where Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given on the Feast of Corpus Christi when the weather will permit.

Nature, too, has assisted most prodigally with her wondrous powers by forming crystal stalactites which hang in glistening masses from the moss-covered roof and inner walls.

A graceful catalpa of more than a century's growth spreads its lofty branches high over the front of the grotto, and lends its pleasing shade to those who linger beneath its leafy bowers; while a verdant background is formed of stately lindens which stand as sentinels to guard Our Lady's shrine.

On visiting the various shrines of Our Lady of Angels, one must pass the little city of the dead, where repose those whose earthly warfare is over, their guerdon won. It was only two years after the purchase of the "Little Seminary" that Mother Agnes realized the necessity of having on the grounds a common burial place for the deceased Sisters. Having sought and obtained the permission of the Right Reverend Bishop, it was located at the present site with the approval of His Lordship. The carefully tended grassy plot set aside in the midst of the beautiful convent grounds seems at variance with the idea of the poet who penned the lines,

"And we see that the departed
Have no place among the living."

Those who rest beneath the little mounds are members of a great religious family, and share still the privileges of faithful children. A true daughter of St. Francis looks forward to death as a happy home-going. Here at Our Lady of Angels, there is nothing suggestive of melancholy thought,—the "stern agony, and breathless darkness." No gloomy vaults cast their shadows over the earth to dispel the sunshine; no mournful cypress invites the breezes to sing solemn dirges among its branches; no lofty monument inspires ambition to excel another in worldly renown. Here is no parsimony suggested in the little portion allotted to each, who, while living, made profession of a poverty which would have shrunk from even this small inheritance.

By the consoling doctrine of the Communion of Saints, an uninterrupted union is preserved between the members of the Church Militant and those who have passed beyond the portals of life. This bond in religious communities is doubly strengthened by the suffrages that are prescribed by rule for their deceased members; and by none is this duty more lovingly performed than by the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia.

At the close of day, groups of novices and other members of the Community at Glen Riddle may be seen directing their steps to the little burying ground to pray for the souls of the departed who repose within the inclosure. Silently with reverent step, they pass up and down the long rows of headstones, pausing for a moment at the lower end of God's acre under the shadow of the Cross, where hangs the image of the crucified Redeemer hopefully suggestive of the resurrection and the glorious life beyond the tomb.

Death itself, it has been truly said, is a great teacher,

> "To those just stepping into the arena of the religious life,
> To those who through long service, have conquered in
> many a weary strife,"—

to one and all it brings home the thought expressed by the Apostle, "Here have we no lasting city, but seek one to come."

As we scan the inscriptions on the little marble slabs that mark the final resting place of those blessed ones of the Lord, we note at the entrance the name of Mother Francis, the venerable Foundress, who, it was deemed proper, should repose among her spiritual daughters at the mother house. Near-by we find the names of Mother Agnes and Mother Stanislaus, both of whom held the office of superior general, and likewise deserve interment among their spiritual children.

The Sisters have extended the privilege of interment to several of the clergy who in life were loyal friends of the Institute. The first of these was Reverend Father Grundner who for fifteen years was the spiritual adviser of the Community and rendered valuable assistance in the dark days of its uncertain existence. Within the same year, 1874, Father Gmeiner, the first chaplain, was also laid to rest. Almost twenty years later, the body of Reverend Mathias Meurer was brought here for interment. It was Father Meurer, it will be recalled, who instructed Mother Agnes for baptism and later presented her to Mother Francis at the time of her entrance to the convent. Not until 1926, was another added to this distinguished company of the dead, when Reverend Father Patterson, the faithful chaplain at Our Lady of Angels for more than a quarter of a century, was laid to rest beside his fellow-priests of the diocese.

What a truly happy assemblage of the dead, if we may so speak, is that in the convent cemetery! What sacred memories in the annals of the Order, the names of these holy priests recall! How fitting it is that at the resurrection, they should find themselves among those whom they guided in the spiritual life and in whose glory they will share!

As we leave the silent little city sleeping in hallowed peace, we reverently retrace our footsteps, repeating within ourselves the consoling words, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

CHAPTER 4

The Training of the Community Teachers

"Let him who dares to teach, never cease to learn."

WHEN the old building at Glen Riddle passed into the hands of the Sisters of St. Francis, it had already acquired the reputation of being a seat of learning, since it had served, as we have seen, first as a boarding school for young ladies, and again, as a preparatory theological seminary. With the advent of its new owners, it was to be no less true to the traditions of the past, as preparations were soon made for other educational activities to be carried on within its venerable walls.

The classrooms were rejuvenated by a coat of fresh paint, and were once more made ready for other knowledge seekers. The school furniture had not been removed at the exodus of the young seminarians and, having likewise undergone its share of transformation, was again pressed into service. On the old box-desks could be read the names of numerous former occupants, most of whom have long since passed into eternity. It may be interesting to know that these old-fashioned desks are still in existence and are occasionally in use during crowded sessions of the summer school. What glorious service they have rendered! Could they but speak, how many noble aspirations might they not reveal of the young seminarians who were one day to be the glory of the Church! The only cause for the longevity of these desks is their interesting history, as their clumsiness would long ago have been sufficient reason for consigning them to the flames.

At the time of the purchase of the new mother house, the Sisters had already become quite extensively engaged in the work of instructing youth in parochial schools. The need of training those who were to teach was very urgent. Normal schools were beginning to multiply and professionally trained teachers were in demand. The Sisters of St. Francis, realizing the importance of thorough preparation for the work of the classroom, endeavored to secure greater efficiency in their schools by providing well-qualified instructors to train those who were to be engaged in teaching. At first these were lay teachers, among whom was Miss Keller, who had had considerable experience in one of the Catholic schools of Philadelphia. She was succeeded by Miss Burns, who for twenty years directed the novitiate school with as much interest as though she had been a member of the Community. Many of the older teachers recall her memory with grateful affection, and acknowledge that her influence was a powerful incentive in fostering all that is high and noble in the profession of teaching. When by reason of her advanced age, she was forced to resign her office into younger hands, the educational problem of the Community had assumed vast proportions. When the question of her successor was discussed, it was decided, upon the advice of ecclesiastical authority, that one of the Sisters should take charge of the novitiate school. For this position, God was already preparing one who for years was to be a bright luminary in the work of education, and through her untiring zeal was to bring the schools under the direction of the Sisters of St. Francis up to the highest standard.

This was Sister Eberharda, a gifted young teacher who had received special training for her life work, and had in a short teaching experience shown remarkable aptitude for imparting knowledge. Her appointment to the novitiate school was made not only because she had a special gift for imparting knowledge, but also because she was a zealous religious, thoroughly Franciscan in spirit, and thereby capable of assisting in training the young members of the Community.

In a religious Order where all are striving for perfection under the same rule, and all perform tasks that are much the same from day to day, there is, so far as external appearances are concerned, but little to distinguish the merits of individual members. The poet tells us that

> "It is enough
> To see one ray of light to judge the glory of the sun."

And so from time to time as we catch glimpses of the Eternal Beauty in the souls of those who, through humility, may ingeniously endeavor to conceal what may attract the esteem of the world, we may safely judge of their interior.

SCHOOL OFFICIALS OF THE COMMUNITY

1. SISTER M. CLETA 2. SISTER M. EBERHARDA 3. SISTER M. MILDRED

In attempting to delineate a character so truly noble and beautiful as that of Sister Eberharda, one must necessarily feel the impotency of mere words. Only those who were privileged to feel the charm of her gracious personality can ever appreciate her true worth.

Three characteristics, we may say, stand out most prominently, which may in some way account for the great influence that Sister exerted on the lives of others,—a spirit of prayer and union with God, an ardent charity, and an intense devotion to the profession of teaching.

Undoubtedly the greatest factor in the marvelous success which crowned the labors of this remarkable religious, was her constant union with the Spouse of her soul. Of Him she thought and of Him she spoke. While we may truly say that Sister Eberharda was an instructor of extraordinary ability, she never lost sight of the fact that the most important duty of the teacher was to prepare the souls of her pupils for Heaven. How well she knew how to draw hearts to love God by introducing into her instructions charming little incidents from the lives of Christ and of His saints, which left a lasting impression on the mind! The teaching of religion was by no means confined to one period of the day; it permeated every exercise, even that which ordinarily would have been a mere mental test. In a paper read at a meeting of the Catholic Educational Association, Sister stresses this point when she writes: "The child must live in a Catholic atmosphere, not only at home and at church, but in school. In other words, the child must breathe the calm and peace coming from the discipline of the school, the silent teaching of the statues and pictures of the classroom, the potent lessons given by the self-control, the obedience to rule, and the prayerfulness of the teacher. . . . Religion should be correlated with other branches of the curriculum and should be the dominant note in all training and discipline."

Sister Eberharda was thoroughly convinced that the service of a religious should at all times show that she belongs to God. From her entrance into religion, her companions were edified at her fervor in prayer. In the resolutions confided to the pages of a little note book, we find, again and again, admonitions in regard to the duty of being more devoted to the exercise of prayer. Those who beheld her assisting daily with rapt attention and reverent demeanor at the various devotions in chapel, would never suspect that Sister could find anything with which to reproach herself in regard to the spiritual exercises. Yet in her humility, she believed she was far from being an edification to her neighbor or of giving sufficient homage to God.

Like St. Francis himself, Sister Eberharda possessed a wonderfully magnetic personality. Her instructions, given without affectation of word or manner, were clear and simple, so that even the least capable member of her class might comprehend the subject taught, and need feel no embarrassment at being inferior in ability. Her voice, peculiarly sweet and musical, had in it a ring of sincerity that penetrated the hearts of her pupils. She not only conveyed to them most clearly the truths of the subject she wished to elucidate, but also impressed them with the thought that they were listening to one thoroughly penetrated with the thought of God's presence, who drew her inspiration from the Infinite Source of knowledge. In her little sphere in the novitiate classroom, the power of this "holy eloquence" was most effective. Who would be able to number the blessings accruing from her diligent labors in preparing the hundreds of young teachers in the Community, who in their turn are molding the hearts of thousands of children that are to be the future support of the Church and the defence of the nation?

There was in Sister Eberharda's bearing a decided religious gravity and a marked indication of deep spirituality. Her thin, bent form showed evidences of penance and unremitting labor. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of her appearance was her kind expressive eyes in which there was a gleam of sympathetic tenderness which invited the confidence of even the most timid. They seemed to pierce the very depths of her pupils' souls yet never to see anything but good. If there was a single redeeming trait in one's character, Sister Eberharda found it. Any capability that could possibly be made to contribute to some worthy end, was encouraged, never crushed. It was this remarkable confidence which she placed in her pupils that won their hearts, and made them feel that there was at least one friend in the world on whose fidelity they might rely.

Of religious vocations, Sister rarely spoke, as she believed, like St. Francis, that the exemplary conduct of a religious should be sufficient to attract others to a life of holiness. "I must edify others by my example," was the oft-repeated resolution she confided to the pages of her little memorandum book. And how nobly she kept that resolve, all who witnessed from day to day her heroic efforts to reach perfection can testify.

Of all the virtues that are prized in community life, there is none so beautiful as charity. Truly has it been called the pearl and queen of virtues; for where charity is found, there are also humility, patience, and other qualities so conducive to peace and harmony in a religious house. "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples," says our Blessed Lord, "if you have love one for another." "Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely; is not puffed up; is not ambitious; seeketh not its own, is not provoked to anger; thinketh no evil; beareth all things, endureth all things." In comparing the tendencies of one's heart with these principles in the standard set up by St. Paul, it is soon recognized that it is no easy task to be charitable. Blessed is the religious indeed, who sets herself resolutely to the task and seizes all the little opportunities for practising charity which are presented by coming in contact with the variety of tastes and inclinations which are found in her companions. It was this virtue, above all, that Sister Eberharda endeavored to acquire. In her life there were no great occasions for displaying her charity such as Mother Francis and her first companions had found among the suffering sick and poor in the slums of the great city. Her mission was confined for years to the novitiate classroom among those entering the ranks to engage in spiritual warfare under the standard of the Cross. How well Sister seemed to realize the numerous struggles of these youthful combatants, and how able she was to apply a healing balm to the troubled soul, which restored peace and confidence just at the moment when most needed!

Although Sister Eberharda was remarkably spiritual-minded, she was, nevertheless, intensely human in her sympathy. In the classroom there was a most cordial relationship with her pupils that banished all restraint and established mutual trust and confidence. All that the word "sister" suggests, could be found in her,—sincere affection, tender sympathy, and a spirit of helpfulness. At everyone's service, she found time for all her own assigned duties as well. There was never the least shadow of annoyance visible on her countenance when called to interrupt a task in which she was busily engaged, in order to assist others. No one hesitated to intrude or feared being repelled when she applied to Sister for assistance. The "latch string of her door was always out." The same cordial greeting awaited one and all. With gracious condescension, Sister interested herself in the welfare of everyone in the Community, and made all feel quite assured of her sisterly affection. In dealing with her pupils, Sister followed the rule of the holy Bishop of Geneva, who chose rather to be too merciful than too severe. "Be severely mild," she writes, "and mildly severe." And this precept she strictly adhered to, so that gentleness always predominated, even at times when circumstances would have seemed to urge severity. That there was no little effort required to preserve this equanimity after forty years of strenuous labor in the classroom, must be acknowledged at least by those who have had experience in the nerve-racking work of dealing with the various problems of school life.

It was nature and grace, combined with her own persevering efforts that made this faithful religious a worthy daughter of the sweet, gentle Saint of Assisi, and like him one of those lovable characters of whom we might truly say,

"None knew thee, but to love thee;
None named thee, but to praise."

Sister Eberharda's mental ability was far above the ordinary; and this, accompanied with scrupulous exactitude in application, made her progress in study remarkable even from girlhood. The more knowledge she acquired, the humbler she became, and the more she feared lest she might deserve the admonition given by St. Francis to his disciples when he said: "Woe to those who lose in sterile study the time they should employ in the acquisition of virtue. On the great day when all will be revealed, they will have nothing in their hands but sheaves of confusion, shame and sorrow." St. Francis, it is well known, *did* oppose book-learning, but only in so far as it resulted in the loss of simplicity of heart and the high ideals of the religious life. That he had the highest regard for those in the fraternity who were possessed of solid learning there is no doubt, as he appointed them to the most responsible positions in the Order. Thus, Peter of Catana was his first vicar-general, and the gifted Brother Pacificus, the poet-laureate, became minister to France. St. Francis wished more than all for men of prayer rather than for learned men. "Do not leave prayer for studies, without a motive; nor give yourselves to study through curiosity; but study how to live best, and teach others the way to virtue by your example. In a word, be true disciples of the Gospel; draw from your meditations what you are to teach in public and the divine fire which should animate you." These admonitions were addressed by St. Francis to his disciples, it is true, over seven hundred years ago. But is there not more reason today why they should be heeded than in those far-away days of simple faith?

Only in comparatively recent years has it been deemed proper that religious should leave the seclusion of the cloister to pursue courses of study within the halls of universities formerly open only to seculars. Changing conditions have demanded this "innovation." And no harm has come except to those who, as St. Francis feared, study only in order to make a worldly display of learning.

During the summer of 1911, when the Catholic University welcomed the teaching Sisterhoods to its halls of learning, the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia were among the first to avail themselves of the superior advantages to be gained through the instructions given by the learned professors of the institution. Among the band of Sisters who attended this first summer session, was Sister Eberharda, who was quite sure that "somebody else" would have been more worthy of the honor than she. Only when assured by her superiors that it would be for the good of the Community, did she feel at ease about pursuing higher studies. It was with the same diffidence in self, that she completed her course and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Much of her time while completing her college course, was employed in assisting others in their studies. Sister did not limit her attention to those of her own Community. She was the friend of all. Out of gratitude, a Sister wrote as follows from her mission in far-away Cyprus: "The recollection of the untiring zeal which you manifested in striving to pass on to us younger religious, thoughts that were to help us in our difficult, but very precious tasks, is still a great factor in my work." College degrees meant nothing to Sister Eberharda other than being prepared the better to help some one else, and to make herself more useful to the Community.

Two years after her graduation from the Sisters College, her capabilities were again recognized by having the degree of Master of Arts conferred upon her by St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg. This she believed would be the end of scholastic honors. But her intellectual superiority was recognized by the authorities of Villanova College who encouraged her superiors to permit her to continue her studies. When obedience plainly indicated that it was God's will that she should work for higher honors, she pursued a course which when completed merited for her the title of Doctor of Philosophy.

In recognition of her achievements a member of the faculty wrote as follows: "Sincerest congratulations on this newest triumph in whole-souled service of God and your Community. May the peace and happiness that attend you today, be as great and as lasting as the toil of preparation has been arduous and prolonged. Words of human praise are not acceptable to the spirit of humble St. Francis that is so exactly yours, but know full well that great as has been your influence for good in the past, this recent achievement shall diffuse a power for further conquest. And therein lies Villanova's claim to glory in your enrollment amongst her alumni."

Words of praise did not make her less humble. Like St. Francis, she ever mistrusted her own strength and was constantly on the alert as though the words of the Gospel, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall," had been addressed directly to her.

In regard to pursuing higher studies, Sister Eberharda writes to one of the Sisters: "Obedience brings the blessing to all this work, because in it all, we are endeavoring to follow out the regulations of superiors and not our own wishes for advancement. 'What I can do for souls,' is the motive power back of all our studies in religious life. Like the great and learned men of the Order, we must endeavor always to retain the sweet simplicity of our Holy Founder. In these days, his poverty except in spirit, can scarcely be imitated;

but his simplicity always remains possible of imitation, and as we advance up the heights of learning, it is our duty to go down more deeply into Franciscan humility and simplicity."

As directress of studies for nearly thirty-five years, Sister Eberharda gave to the Community her best efforts by training the teachers according to the newest and best methods, and by inspiring them with the highest ideals of the religious teacher. In order to avoid educational fads, that are every day being suggested as a solution for the various difficulties met with in the classroom, Sister, with the assistance of other skilled teachers, worked out carefully definite methods for the presentation of the various subjects taught in the grades. Thus, uniformity in the method of teaching, which has been a powerful factor in securing the advancement of pupils, prevails in the schools under the direction of the Sisters of St. Francis.

In order that this uniformity be permanent, supervisors are appointed who come in touch with the teachers frequently in order to aid them in the application of the methods. The individuality of the teacher is by no means disregarded, as no iron-bound adherence to details is exacted, although definite principles are clearly stated and must be followed.

At the urgent solicitations of her superiors, Sister Eberharda prepared for publication a textbook on Methods in Teaching Arithmetic, with the hope that it would "awaken in the young teacher a consciousness of greater power amid the difficulties of the classroom." As stated in the preface, "the book had its beginning in the desire to contribute something toward ennobling the serious profession of teaching."

"The author of the present book," says Reverend Felix Kirsch, O. M. Cap., "is no blind worshiper of scientific investigation. She has tried out her every theory in classroom practice, and with her supervision of many classes extending over many years, she has seen her theories tried out by other teachers also." "A valuable feature of the book," he adds further, "is the successful attempt made to show how arithmetic should be taught to bring out to the full its cultural, disciplinary, and spiritual values, instead of being treated as a mere utilitarian subject. Closely allied to this feature is the attempt made in several places to correlate arithmetic with other subjects of the course of study, notably with the religious instruction."

In a letter of commendation to the author, an appreciative educator writes: "I hasten to extend my congratulations to yourself and Community upon the great good to religion and Christian teaching which it is sure to produce. It must indeed be a source of great satisfaction to you that the fruits of your scholarship, wide experience, and practical skill are to be perpetuated and extended to a wider circle of teachers, with a consequent increase in usefulness. Knowing you and your motives, as I do, I realize that it has not been a spirit of self-glory, but rather, the religious motive of Community devotion and sacrifice as characteristic of your life as a Religious, which has prompted the preparation of the Methods. And I am persuaded that it is that spirit which has sanctified and ennobled the work, that will contribute to its success in the field of religious education."

No one realized more fully than Sister Eberharda the need of academic preparation for the work of the classroom, and of pedagogical training as well. But there was an important factor to be considered in the preparation; namely, that the Catholic teacher should obtain her knowledge from sources that were not polluted by the poison of atheism and infidelity. Hence she says in an address before the Catholic Educational Association: "If our teachers are to keep in sight the Catholic viewpoint in education and preserve intact the fundamental principles of our system, it is essential that they, the teachers, receive their normal and college training under Catholic auspices. The State normal and non-Catholic college or university are not the proper professional training schools for our religious. We all agree that religion must permeate the heart and pulse of the Catholic system. That it may continue to do so, our teachers must imbibe their training from a Catholic viewpoint. Our Catholic colleges throughout the land are, in the person of their respective faculties, sacrificing every moment of time, every energy of heart and mind to give our Sisterhoods the advantages of a thorough academic and professional college training in keeping with Catholic doctrine and Catholic philosophy. What view of literature and of historical questions can our teachers give their high school pupils if they, the former,

OUR LADY OF ANGELS HIGH AND TEACHER TRAINING SCHOOL
Glen Riddle, Pa.

OUR LADY OF ANGELS HOUSE OF STUDIES, SISTERS COLLEGE
Washington, D. C.

have received their training in institutions inimical to the Church and subversive of her faith? Will not the very atmosphere of our classrooms become charged with views that would not stand the crucial test of Catholic philosophy?

"As we have said before, the poison of a false philosophy is so insidious that even the keenest intellect often fails to detect it in our readers, histories, and scientific texts. How will our teachers be able to cope with these difficulties unless their training in philosophy and psychology has been under Catholic professors, imbued with Catholic principles? The question is a vital one, particularly now when State certification is drawing many religious to the State normals or to courses given by State normal professors. The fear has been expressed that if we do not guard our religious against this outside influence, our schools will become Catholic only in name.

"If we, who are intrusted with the training of young religious teachers or are in any way responsible for that training, see that the principles which lie at the very base of our system are safeguarded, then shall our teachers remain as they have always been, co-laborers of Jesus Christ. Their silent partnership with Him will then be such that every look, word, and act of theirs will lead the souls of the children to God, the Alpha and Omega of all true education."

In accordance with the views of Sister Eberharda, the Community has always pursued the safe course of having its teachers trained under thoroughly Catholic auspices. In recent years, therefore, the Sisters of St. Francis have been enrolled at the various Catholic institutions which have offered facilities for their training; namely, at the Catholic University of America, Villanova College, Fordham University, Boston College, the Catholic University of Oklahoma, and Creighton and Gonzaga universities.

For many years, the Community considered the erection of a house of studies at the Sisters College, but only recently were plans formulated by which this was made possible. Through the efforts of Reverend Mother Kilian, who has ever been most interested in all that would further Christian education, a thoroughly equipped modern convent has been provided, which is an ideal home for the student, quiet and secluded, as it is, and within the cultural atmosphere of the nation's capital.

At the Convent of Our Lady of Angels, a high school has been established whose course has been commended by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education and recognized as that of a standard institution. Besides this, a normal school, affiliated with Villanova College, affords means for thorough professional training for those who are to be engaged in teaching. At the mother house, also, summer school is conducted every year for the improvement of the teachers on the various missions. Here well-qualified instructors present new ideas to those whose manifold duties during the school year render it impossible to give themselves to any considerable amount of study.

Thus we see that the work begun so inauspiciously in the little crowded classrooms of the old seminary has met all the demands that changing conditions have prescribed for greater progress in school work. And today the teaching system of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia is commended by leading educational authorities.

The constant progress which the Community has made in its work in the parochial schools is due in large measure to the untiring zeal of Sister Eberharda who, for the forty years of her religious life, devoted all the wealth of her superior intellect to this worthy cause. When at last her strength failed and the mind and body could no longer be forced into action at the command of her powerful will, with humble submission she patiently resigned herself to bear the heavy cross laid upon her. For a whole year, she lay a helpless invalid racked by the most excruciating pain which the skill of attending physicians was not able to relieve. As she had been accustomed to great exactitude in following the Community exercises, and to labor in spite of the many appeals of nature for rest, the inaction and solitude attendant upon her illness were themselves a great trial. Her life, like that of every true religious, had been a slow martyrdom. And when the last stroke of God's chastening hand was laid upon her, she could not bring herself to ask that it might be removed, in spite of the earnest solicitations of her friends that she should pray that her life might be spared.

Reverend Dr. H. J. Heuser of Overbrook Seminary, who had for years been a devoted friend of Sister Eberharda, often visited her during her illness. When at last he realized her critical condition, he urged her to pray that God might prolong her life to labor for the Community which so much needed her assistance.

"But, Doctor," replied Sister somewhat troubled, "I was always taught to pray that God's will might be done."

"Then, my child," answered the learned theologian, as he knelt at her bedside, "pray with me as you wish."

Thus we see that a humble Franciscan Sister taught the learned Doctor Heuser a lesson on prayer.

While Sister was most solicitous for the welfare of the Community, her humility forbade her to believe that her place could not be filled by others even more capable. The accomplishment of God's will was dearer to her than life; the attainment of perfection her highest desire.

The observance of the least point of the Rule Sister Eberharda considered of the highest importance. What to others may have seemed trivial was to her very serious.

Those who live in Community life know what a real sacrifice it requires to keep the rule of silence prescribed for certain times and places. This rule Sister Eberharda kept most scrupulously from the time she entered the Community. Those who were associated with her during her novitiate days say that she was never known to speak one unnecessary word during the time when silence was to be observed. And it is related by one of her schoolmates that Sister observed with the same exactness the rules of the classroom while she was still a young girl.

No less careful was Sister Eberharda in regard to speaking of the faults of her neighbor. No unkind word of criticism of any one ever escaped her lips. All could feel assured that Sister would always have a good word to say of them, no matter how unfavorably they might be regarded by others.

These dispositions prepared her admirably for the supreme sacrifice that awaited her at the close of her life. No word of murmur escaped her lips at the intensity of the pain she was obliged to suffer. There were no vain regrets at her inability to help herself or others. It was God's way of preparing her for the crown that awaited her, and His way was best. With the confidence of a child in the arms of a loved father, she reposed on the bosom of God's love. Quietly the sleep of Death came to the tired soul that had waited so patiently for the coming of the Bridegroom, and she entered at last into her well earned rest.

It was on the 16th of July, 1926. Retreat had just closed at the mother house, and the jubilarians for that year were yet singing their joyous songs of jubilee when the news of their dear Sister's death changed the joyful scene into one of mourning. The summer school pupils who had assembled for the opening of the session that eventful morning made their way to the classrooms silently and sorrowfully. Greetings between the Sisters were exchanged in subdued tones, as each one felt a personal loss—the departure of a devoted teacher who in her affections could never be quite replaced. Among the sorrowing band of Sisters, no one felt the loss of Sister Eberharda more keenly than Sister Mildred, who for years had been most closely associated with her in the educational work of the Community, and had regarded her companionship and guidance as a "delicate compliment from our Lord Himself."

In preparation for Sister Eberharda's interment, loving hands culled the roses from the convent garden, and reverently covered the cold damp earth of the little narrow cell which was to be her last resting place. And as

"The rose that lives its little hour
Is prized above the sculptured flower,"

so each fragrant blossom upon which her lifeless remains rested was a tribute of love whose message the poet voices in his beautiful lines,

"Sweet as the tender fragrance which survives
When martyred flowers breathe out their little lives;
Sweet as a song which once consoled our pain
But never will be sung to us again
Is thy remembrance."

And the keynote to this veneration which she so justly deserves may be found among the various consolatory messages sent to her bereaved Community. "Sister Eberharda was not only a gifted and learned woman," writes a saintly Jesuit, "but an exemplary religious and a perfect lady." "From her life," another adds, "may be learned a stirring lesson in heroic self-sacrifice and devotion to duty;" while the beautiful words of her panegyrist convey the hopeful message that "her memory will ever beckon onward all timid souls to a fuller realization of the power that is within them when wedded to the mortified life of Christ."

Among the Sisters of St. Francis, the memory of Sister Eberharda will ever be held in grateful benediction; and her name will be revered and honored as

> "One of the few, the immortal names
> That were not borne to die."

Her voice that once inspired and consoled is now silent. But may we not believe, like Newman in "A Voice from Afar," that her spirit yet assures us of her presence and whispers, "I am still near?" And may we not also fondly hope that, like the Little Flower of Jesus who wished to spend her heaven "doing good upon earth," she, too, who had learned that the "flowers of happiness grow along the highways of usefulness," is still continuing her mission of helpfulness to others?

PART VI

Rapid Expansion in the East

CHAPTER
1. Activity in Hospital Building
2. Orphanages
3. Homes for the Aged
4. Parish Schools
5. Negro Missions

1. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL
BALTIMORE, MD.

2. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL
LANCASTER, PA.

3. ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL (1879)
TRENTON, N. J.

4. ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL
TRENTON, N. J.

CHAPTER 1

Activity in Hospital Building

"\. . . through the cloister climb
the steps of heaven
With works of mercy."

WHILE engaged in the various duties which demanded her attention at the foundation in Glen Riddle, Mother Agnes was not unmindful of other charitable works that were proposed for her consideration. Among these was the erection of a hospital in Trenton, which had been suggested some years before. It was now the year 1871, almost a hundred years after the noble Washington and his devoted band of patriots had struck the fatal blow to the unsuspecting Hessians on that memorable Christmas day, after the perilous crossing of the ice-bound Delaware. The stirring lesson of brotherly love which the great American commander had given his countrymen on his visit, as a sympathetic friend, to the dying Hessian leader, his once dreaded enemy, had long been forgotten. Religious intolerance and bigotry were fast breaking asunder the bonds of charity which had long united the inhabitants of the historic city. Even among those of the "true Fold," bitter feuds had resulted in deplorable schism, so that peace seemed nowhere to be found. Already a little band of Franciscan Sisters had been sent, as we have seen, to St. Francis School, where they had labored under distressing difficulties. Their courage was undaunted, however, and instead of withdrawing from the scene of conflict, they sought means for returning good for evil.

Penetrated with the spirit of St. Francis, these, his humble daughters, had no little share in the restoration of harmony among their dissenting neighbors. It was the wish of the peace-loving Saint of Assisi, so long a mediator between warring factions among his own countrymen, that his followers should ever sing to the world the delights of peace, and by their own example attract others to the Fountain of Charity.

The establishment of a hospital was assuredly a promising means of lessening the prejudice and hatred that were displayed against the Sisters. Their first attempts to collect funds for this purpose were far from encouraging. Their very appearance on the streets excited the rage of the impious, who threatened them with dire vengeance, should they continue their work.

As we note how contradictions and trials of every nature oppose the plans of those who are intent upon doing good, we are reminded of the truth of the words of St. Catherine, that never from the beginning till the end of the world has God willed or shall He will that anything great should be accomplished but through much suffering. "You shall be hated by all men for My name's sake," says our Blessed Lord; "and they who hate you will think that they do God a service." "We must never think from whom crosses come," says the saintly Cure of Ars, "for they all come from God." He, indeed, wills that the work undertaken for His glory should prosper; but He also wills that those whom He uses to accomplish that work should be sanctified; hence, they must with Him tread the royal way of the Cross.

The little band of Franciscan Sisters who were entrusted with the building of the hospital in Trenton were by no means unaware of the opposition they would have to contend with; but they were not to be intimidated, and they valiantly continued their work. "Our reserves," says the Cure of Ars, "dry up the current of God's mercies, and our distrust stops the course of His blessings." There was no reserve with these good religious. They were confident of God's goodness and mercy and were rewarded far beyond their most sanguine hopes. To Sister Hyacinth was assigned the superiorship of the hospital. And in this choice Mother Agnes was indeed inspired, as Sister Hyacinth possessed rare qualities that enabled her to cope successfully with the difficulties that opposed the work. Sister was a convert to the Faith, and perhaps realized better than others that the prejudices which existed against Catholics was to a great extent due to ignorance rather than to malice. Endowed as she was with a winning personality, she rarely failed to gain the good will of those with whom she came in contact. With remarkable strength of character was united the simplicity that charms and invites the greatest confidence. These amiable traits did not preclude shrewdness in business matters and tact in dealing with the various affairs that demanded her attention. But these qualities would have meant nothing without God's help. Sister Hyacinth was, above all, a devoted daughter of St. Francis, with high ideals of religious life and eager to spend herself for the good of her neighbor. The building of a hospital appealed to this good religious as a work which would be most conducive to lessening the prejudice which existed against the Church.

When the Right Reverend Bishop Bayley was consulted about the project, he readily gave his consent. The vicar-general, Very Reverend Anthony Smith, was also very enthusiastic about the work, and promised assistance in a practical way. With this encouragement, the Sisters sought a suitable location for the proposed institution. They soon found for sale a lot which was owned by Mr. Samuel Wilson, a well disposed non-Catholic. The land was valued at $1,800. As the Community in Philadelphia was too poor to offer material assistance, the Sisters had to rely on the generosity of the charitably disposed for the payment of this sum, and also for funds needed to erect the hospital building. With less than a dollar in their possession they solicited aid, and in a short time collected $500. With this sum of money they hastened to the office of Mr. Wilson to make the first payment on the lot. When Mr. Wilson presented the receipt, the Sisters were pleasantly surprised to find that it included the whole indebtedness. He had thereby donated $1,300. Already God was visibly blessing the work of the Sisters; but they were not to have even this little success without a cross. When the title to the property was sought, Mrs. Wilson refused to give it; and only after months of waiting and praying was it finally secured. The good woman had first to be assured that the hospital would by all means be erected on the lot before she would give her consent for the transfer of the deed. Mrs. Wilson, in spite of the great trial she had given to the Sisters, afterwards became one of their best friends and an ardent supporter of the institution. Other kind benefactors from time to time came to the assistance of the Sisters, so that by May, 1874, the building was completed. It was then dedicated to St. Francis by the Right Reverend Bishop Corrigan of Newark. Gradually, the bitter prejudice that had existed disappeared, as the sweet generous service of the Sisters towards friend and foe alike appealed to the most obdurate heart.

Among the most generous benefactors of the institution at a later day may be mentioned Messrs. J. A. Roebling and Son, H. C. Kelsey, and B. C. Kuser, whose princely gifts have made possible many improvements and the maintenance of the hospital.

Sister Hyacinth, in a long superiorship of nearly forty years, conducted the institution in a most systematic way, and by her kind, sympathetic interest in the patients, was instrumental in increasing the patronage of the hospital.

Twenty-five years after the founding of the institution the Holy Father sent his blessing as a silver jubilee gift in a message which reads as follows:

Rome, May 31, 1897.

DEAR SISTER HYACINTH:

His Holiness on the occasion of the hospital jubilee, sends with fatherly love his apostolic benediction to you, the other Sisters, and all belonging to you, and the benefactors of the hospital.

Signed: M. CARDINAL RAMPOLLO.

The next undertaking of the Sisters was a home for the nurses where they might enjoy the conveniences and comforts which their services merited. With the co-operation of well disposed citizens of Trenton, a drive was made for $150,000, and in a short time this amount was over-subscribed by $100,000. A magnificent building was then erected where the nurses were provided with pleasant surroundings which have been conducive to their health and happiness. At the request of some of the leading citizens of Trenton, Sister Hyacinth, who had been absent for several years, was summoned to be present at the dedication ceremonies. On this occasion Mr. Roebling, who had ever proved a firm friend of the institution, presented her with the magnificent sum of $50,000 to be used for future needs of the hospital. It was a touching scene as the aged religious, enfeebled by reason of her four score years, advanced to receive the princely gift of the generous donor, amid the cheers of an admiring and grateful people, who treasured the memory of her long and devoted service in their midst.

The marvelous progress of the work of the Sisters in Trenton, in spite of the severe trials of their first attempts, assures us of the truth of the words, "The seed of an abundant harvest is ordinarily sown in the earth of self-abnegation." It was, moreover, the reward of persevering prayer; for it was through prayer that the Sisters became courageous and able to bear not only the reproaches cast upon them, but also the sufferings resulting from their extreme poverty.

Scarcely a year had passed after the hospital had been founded in Trenton, when the citizens of Reading sought the privilege of having for the sick of their city an institution conducted by the Sisters of St. Francis. The request came to Mother Agnes through the Reverend Father Borneman, who had previously sought and obtained the permission of the Most Reverend Archbishop Wood. As Mother Agnes was always disposed to accept a work of charity that had been recommended to her by ecclesiastical authority, she at once considered the possibility of undertaking the work. As the prospects seemed favorable, she sent Sisters Margaret and Paul, under the superiorship of Sister Walburga, to prepare for the opening of an institution. A small frame building was secured and placed under the patronage of St. Joseph. Here the sick were cared for, until a new structure was erected and dedicated by Archbishop Ryan in May, 1886. Later, through the generosity of the Reverend Edward McKee, additional land was purchased upon which a new wing was built, increasing the capacity of the hospital and the possibilities for many conveniences. From time to time many improvements have been made, including a well furnished nurses' home; so that the hospital today with its seven and one-half acres of surrounding ground is most imposing and one of the most efficiently equipped institutions in the East.

Still another request to take charge of a hospital came from an unexpected source, when the Right Reverend Bishop Shanahan of the Harrisburg diocese, appealed very urgently to Mother Agnes to purchase an institution in Lancaster which had been under the supervision of the Brothers of St. John of God. Father Sagerer of the Society was the originator of a plan to build a parish church, which was to serve also as a hospital chapel. On either side of the church he proposed to erect a building. One building was to be for men; the other for women. The care of the men was to be given to Brothers who he proposed should come from Europe;

while the women were to be cared for by Sisters whose services he hoped to secure. The enterprise was a very laudable one; but Father Sagerer seems to have lacked support and was unable to realize his expectations, as nothing was built except the part which was to be occupied by men. This was completed and dedicated to St. Joseph, and the Brothers began their ministrations to the sick. In a short time, however, Father Sagerer became so deeply involved in debt that he was obliged to close the hospital and to withdraw the Brothers from Lancaster. In order to satisfy the creditors, there was no alternative but to dispose of the property by sheriff's sale, as the Harrisburg diocese was not in a position to assume the debt. It was at this time that Bishop Shanahan appealed to Mother Agnes to come to his rescue and purchase the property, and thus save a blot on Catholicity in his diocese, as the hospital had all indications of passing into the hands of non-Catholics.

Mother Agnes was ever ready to assist in any worthy undertaking; but in this instance, it seemed inadvisable to contract so great an indebtedness, as the funds of the Community were very low, and there was no one from whom she might reasonably hope to obtain the needed sum. But Bishop Shanahan urged Mother Agnes to consider the conditions. After mature reflection and earnest prayer for light, she laid the affair before her ecclesiastical superiors. These finally consented that she purchase the property. A loan of $23,000 was obtained with which to pay the first mortgage. Without any visible means of paying the large sum, Mother Agnes again entrusted the work to good St. Joseph upon whose powerful intercession she had ever relied in other of her laudable adventures.

Again, we must marvel at Mother Agnes' spirit of charity, as well as her sweet, childlike confidence in the goodness of God. In like circumstances, there would have been few indeed who would have burdened themselves with such a responsibility. But Mother Agnes' great-heartedness would not leave unheeded an appeal which seemed to her to concern God's honor very considerably.

As soon as the transfer of the property was made, Sisters Eusebia and Genevieve were sent to put the house in readiness for occupancy. As it had been vacant for some time it had suffered the usual results of unoccupied houses, and had literally to be scoured before it could be made presentable. As soon as all was in readiness, Sister Eulalia, the superior, and her assistants, Sisters Mauritia, Cecilia, Johanna, Barbara, Regis, and a postulant began the work of caring for the sick.

A little incident of the first day's experience will show that St. Joseph was not unmindful of those who placed their work under his patronage. To Sister Cecilia had been assigned the care of the kitchen and she was most solicitous about securing provisions. When she arrived at the hospital she still had two apples left of the lunch that had been given her for the journey. The storeroom was empty and there was no immediate prospect of getting supplies from any source. But Sister Cecilia was not discouraged. Taking her two apples she placed them on the window-sill near a little statue of St. Joseph, which had been given her for the kitchen. At the same time she charged the dear Saint to see that the Sisters get some more apples. The simple prayer of faith was soon answered. That very afternoon, a delivery wagon stopped at the door and the driver brought in two barrels of large, rosy-cheeked apples bearing a tag addressed "To the Sister Cook."

The remembrance of this little manifestation of God's loving care of His children served as a ray of sunshine in the dark days that followed.

The attitude of the people of Lancaster towards the Sisters was similar to that in Trenton in pioneer times; hence, their efforts met with little encouragement. The stigma of failure still clung to the institution, and the people would not be convinced that under the new management it would be any more successful than it had been under the old regime. Besides, the townspeople were mostly non-Catholic and bitterly prejudiced against the Church. Particularly was this so, as a fair proportion of the inhabitants were Mennonites, who were especially antagonistic. Their animosity was, moreover, encouraged by their ministers, who directed that no farm products be sold to the hospital; so that often even for money the Sisters could not procure proper food and other necessary supplies to conduct their institution suitably. On one occasion, it is related, a half ton of coal which had been ordered by the Sisters was withheld by the driver when he came to deliver it, because the Sisters had not sufficient money to pay for it immediately. The driver was preparing to take his departure when a kind-hearted neighbor, who had watched the proceedings, came to the rescue and relieved the embarrassment of the Sisters by paying for the coal himself.

There were comparatively few Catholics in the city, and most of these were in very moderate circumstances; so that for them to render pecuniary assistance to the hospital was impossible. Moreover, in such a hostile atmosphere, it was quite detrimental to their welfare to give any outward manifestation of their interest in the work of the Sisters; therefore, the hospital lacked patronage, and the prospect of continuing the work was very discouraging.

Again, we must say that the little band of Sisters who had been sent to Lancaster had been schooled in bearing privations and contradictions. But they realized, nevertheless, that to build upon the Cross meant to build upon a firm foundation. Sister Eulalia was the inspiration of the work, and bravely sustained the courage of the Sisters during the dark days when all seemed to conspire to thwart their every endeavor. Yet, notwithstanding the opposition they met with, the Sisters succeeded in gaining the confidence of the people, who gradually forgot the old-time prejudice and rallied to their support, so that a flourishing institution was established. Even their separated brethren, the Mennonites, have now overcome their antipathy, and seem disposed to make reparation for past insults, not only by selling their farm products at reasonable prices, but also by sending gratuitously whatever is not sold on market day.

As has been the case in other hospitals in charge of the Sisters, the institution at Lancaster has been enlarged by the addition of buildings of the most highly approved forms and types of construction, and equipped with all the appliances known to medical science. The last movement for a larger hospital was made in 1919, when plans were made for a laundry, a power and heating plant, and a new wing. When these were completed and equipped in 1923, St. Joseph's Hospital was as perfect as it was reasonably possible to make it.

The present public-spirited citizens of Lancaster, while priding themselves on the magnificent institution which has been erected in their midst, bitterly deplore the past injustice of their townsmen, and gladly give honor to whom honor is due. At the dedication ceremonies of the last building, the Chairman of the Building Committee called the attention of the people of the city to the great

ST. AGNES HOSPITAL
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

services which the Sisters of St. Francis had rendered in their midst. "And to what purpose is all this?" he asks. "Is it to make money and to declare dividends at regular periods for its stockholders? The only dividends considered worth while to these good Sisters who labor unceasingly without price, are the recompenses which come to them from duty well performed, and which enable them to obey the divine command of love for their neighbor. No salaries in terms of money could compare for them with the serene satisfaction that comes to them in the performance of a holy work. Truly they serve, and their lives of sacrifice should be a constant inspiration to all of us in the moulding of our own lives.

"In your day of need and distress," he continues, "all that these noble, modest Sisters expect or ask for themselves and those that will in the years to come succeed them here, is the humble privilege to serve and to soothe you, to cheer and to aid you, and to lead you back to health and joy. Their only reward for that is shelter beneath this roof, and food and raiment for their needs, while *you* receive the wealth of their lives devoted to humility and charity, which they here consecrate to their Maker."

As we behold St. Joseph's Hospital today, magnificent in structure and complete in every detail, we must not forget the many anxious moments which its purchase, at an inopportune time, cost Mother Agnes; nor must we overlook the fact that the institution which, at the present time represents an outlay of not less than a million dollars, was built up by Sisters through the endurance of privations and poverty so extreme that at one time they had not the wherewithal to pay for a few shovelfuls of coal.

Scarcely five years had passed when Mother Agnes was urged to found a hospital in South Philadelphia. The request came through Dr. Andrew Nebinger who represented the physicians of that part of the city, all of whom had long considered an institution for the sick a pressing necessity.

Just as had been the case in Lancaster, the appeal came at an inopportune time, as heavy debts had already been contracted and payments were demanded from so many sources that it seemed inadvisable to consider the proposition. But there was manifestly a real demand; and Dr. Nebinger insisted that the hospital would, by all means, be a wonderfully charitable undertaking.

Mother Agnes reflected and prayed. The great hospital of the future appeared to loom up before her spiritual vision; the appeal could not be put aside.

There was but $200 in the bank and this small amount did not warrant beginning the building of an institution which would necessitate the outlay of a considerable sum.

But the thought of God's goodness and His power seemed to urge the confidence that He would supply the deficiency just as He had in the long ago multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed the hungry multitude. With this consideration, the sanction of the Right Reverend Bishop Wood was sought. His Lordship strongly opposed the erection of the hospital at first, as the location was too far away from the center of population, and the venture seemed hazardous without at least some funds with which to begin.

Mother Agnes respected the counsel of the good Bishop and considered all his objections, but she was still confident that it was the will of God that the institution should be established and decided to await another time for presenting her petition anew. As the Feast of St. Agnes approached, Mother believed it would be opportune to renew her appeal on her festal day. Accordingly, she again visited His Lordship, and in her own inimitable way, begged him to grant her request in honor of her patron saint. This time, the good Bishop showed the first signs of yielding. With Mother Agnes' assurance that generous benefactors would assist her, His Lordship gave his consent for undertaking the enterprise; and Mother departed like a happy child, praising her dear little patron saint for this manifestation of her powerful intercession.

The Sisters soon began a house-to-house canvass, and their success was marvelous. To the numerous mites of the poor were added magnificent sums from Mr. Francis Drexel and his three daughters, Mrs. E. V. Morrell, Mrs. Walter George Smith, and Katherine, now Mother Katherine, who had formerly given a handsome sum to complete the novitiate. Beside these names, must be placed those of Drs. Andrew and Robert Nebinger, who contributed largely to the first hospital building.

A suitable location was secured at the corner of Broad and Mifflin Streets, and soon a sufficient amount of money had been collected to warrant the beginning of the work. The corner stone was laid in 1882; but, owing to delays, the building was not completed until five years later. In memory of Mother Agnes' patron saint, under whose clientage the work had been begun, the hospital was dedicated to St. Agnes. The beautiful statue of this noble Roman maiden which peers forth from a niche in the great building, reminds the passer-by of the triumph of her youthful years, and gives hope of her continued protection to those who now conduct the institution.

Sister Eulalia was recalled from her difficult post in the Lancaster hospital to assume the still greater burden of superiorship in the new institution; and with her were associated Sisters Cecilia, Afra, and Florentina, all of whom were stout of heart and ready for any sacrifice for humanity's sake. The furnishing of the hospital could be made very slowly, so that there were lacking for some time many things that were really considered among the necessaries. For several weeks, the Sisters lived at the convent on Reed Street and daily walked to the hospital while getting the building ready for occupancy. As there was no regular source of revenue, Sister Eulalia was often confronted with serious financial difficulties; but her previous experience had taught her that without God's assistance the pious works of religious could not succeed, and her confidence never failed in bringing what was needed.

In order to make ends meet, the Sisters were obliged to live very frugally. As the income from the hospital was insufficient to meet expenses, the Sisters daily solicited assistance, as Mother Francis and her companions had done.

At one time, it is related, enough had been saved to put aside $100 for the payment of some coal. When the time came for paying the bill, Sister Eulalia found to her surprise that the money was not in the safe where she had placed it. A bolt of gingham which had been left in the office was also gone. Search was made immediately, but neither money nor goods could be found. Sister was very much embarrassed by not having the money to pay the coal bill, and urged the Sisters to pray to St. Anthony "to restore the treasures lost." In a few days a letter came which contained the money, and the gingham was found concealed in the attic. There was great rejoicing among the Sisters that day, not only for the return of the stolen money and goods, but also for the repentance of the sinner who had restored them.

One Saturday afternoon, Sister Cecilia who had come to St. Agnes' from Lancaster to take charge of the kitchen, informed Sister Eulalia that there was no bread in the house for Sunday. The good Superior was well aware that there was no money in the house either, and in order to secure the bread, appointed two postulants to go on a soliciting tour. They had not been gone long when they met a charitable gentleman who gave them a dollar. With this they hastened joyfully to the bakery to buy the needed bread. The clerk was very generous and filled three large baskets with nice fresh loaves. The postulants then departed with light hearts, although they were weighed down by their precious load. They had not gone far when three young men approached them and offered to carry their baskets; and again they were made glad. On their return home, they were met by the Sisters with great rejoicing. All thanked God for His goodness and offered fervent prayers for their kind benefactors—the good man who had given the dollar, the generous baker who had dealt out "good measure," and the three polite boys who had carried the bread home.

God's providence had been strikingly manifested in the inception of the hospital, when Mother Agnes began the project under the clientage of her noble little Roman patron; and the work in all the future years was continued with no less evidence of God's special blessing.

At one time in the early history of the institution, it was learned that the lots adjoining the hospital were to be sold at public auction, and dwelling houses erected thereon. This would have been a serious detriment to the interests of the hospital, as there might in time be objectionable neighbors who would disturb the patients and cause the Sisters much embarrassment. It was urgent that the property should be added to the hospital grounds in order to prevent difficulties that later could not be remedied. The land was valued at $30,000. But where to obtain that immense sum was a question for which there seemed to be no answer. Mother Agnes as usual had recourse to prayer as in other pressing necessities. The happy thought occurred to her that perhaps the Misses Drexel might come to her rescue again. As Sister Johanna had nursed some of the

Drexel family during serious illness, it was suggested that she visit their home, and state the urgency of securing possession of the property.

With hopeful anticipation of securing the desired assistance, Sister Johanna went to the Drexel home. On reaching her destination, she was most graciously received by Miss Katherine whose warmth of welcome made her feel quite at ease in presenting her request. Thirty thousand dollars was indeed a large sum to ask for; but as there seemed to be no limit to Miss Drexel's goodness of heart, the favor was solicited without fear of its being considered extravagant.

When Sister Johanna made known her mission, Miss Drexel seemed most eager to assist her. It was, however, impossible at the time to give a decided reply, she informed Sister, as her sisters would have to be consulted and they would all have to act conjointly. They were not at home at the time, but she assured Sister that upon their return, she would urge that they advance the sum of money needed. There was deep regret visible on the countenance of Miss Katherine at not being able to give Sister immediate assistance; but the ring of sincerity in her words gave assurance that she would state the case so persuasively to her sisters, that they would be constrained to give Mother Agnes the desired assistance.

Sister Johanna returned home much encouraged and acquainted the Sisters with the result of her mission. Mother Agnes as usual took refuge in prayer. Like the Centurion of the Gospel, she felt sure of her request if God would but say the word to the good Drexel sisters which would inspire them with the urgency of her need.

There was no limit to Mother Agnes' confidence in God's power and goodness. That night while the others retired, she and one or two of the Sisters who shared the anxieties of their Mother, remained before the Blessed Sacrament all through the long hours of the night till dawn, pleading with the Lord that He might grant their request. God was pleased with the prolonged prayer of faith of His needy children. The next morning before the sale took place, a messenger arrived from the Drexel homestead with the exact amount to purchase the property. As we learn of such incidents as this, we realize how true are the oft repeated words of the poet Tennyson, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

After a superiorship of four years, Sister Eulalia, who had shown wonderful ability in superintending the founding of two hospitals, was again called upon to assume charge of a new institution for the sick in Providence. Sister Borromeo was then appointed as her successor at St. Agnes'; and in a long career of over twenty years, her remarkable executive ability, strict discipline, and admirable tact, gained for her a wide reputation for efficiency in hospital management.

In 1913, the superiorship of the hospital was delegated to Sister Georgina, who ably continued the work of her predecessors. In her thirteen years of service, she displayed unusual capability in dealing with financial affairs; and by her pleasing personality and peculiarly gracious and dignified religious bearing won the esteem of all the various classes of people with whom the duties of her office necessitated daily contact.

In its continued progress for more than forty years, there has been nothing left undone at St. Agnes Hospital to insure the most commendable service to its patrons.

How truly heavenly was the inspiration which urged Mother Agnes to found the institution which has in its devoted service to humanity been a blessing to the great city of Philadelphia and a glory to the Sisters of St. Francis! The story of its inception must ever stimulate all with veneration for the saintly Mother Agnes, who, like her virgin-martyr patron, sought for light and strength in God alone with whom all things are possible.

Through the earnest solicitations of Reverend William Stang, we find the Sisters of St. Francis entering the historic city of Providence to open another institution for the sick.

The Right Reverend Bishop Harkins with a view to founding a Catholic hospital had purchased property known as the Harris Estate, which was situated in one of the most fashionable residence sections of the city. The stately old mansion, set in a two-acre grassy plot, offered the pleasing prospects of caring for the sick in healthful as well as beautiful surroundings.

The renovating and altering of the fine old building soon transformed the grand drawing room and cozy boudoirs into wards and dormitories; and where once dwelt the gaily clad lady of society, the sombre clad nun now spends herself caring for suffering humanity.

For the purpose of conducting the institution, Mother Agnes sent three Sisters under the superiorship of Sister Johanna. When they arrived in Providence, they were very kindly received by Father Stang; and as the hospital was not yet in readiness for occupancy, they remained for a time at St. Aloysius Orphanage, where they received most cordial hospitality from the Sisters of Mercy.

The day for the opening of the hospital was happily that of the Feast of dear St. Joseph, to whom Mother Agnes had already entrusted several institutions for the sick. The first patient to be admitted was indeed an object of charity, as it was a terrible cancer case for which there could be no permanent relief. The care of those for whom there ordinarily seems to be no room elsewhere has characterized the institution from the beginning. And perhaps, we may trace this spirit of charity back to the origin of the city itself, whose name happily suggests the story of its founder who provided a refuge for those who were rejected by their intolerant neighbors.

The people of Providence were appreciative of the noble work of the Sisters, and generously contributed to the support of the institution, which they recognized as a great blessing to their city. So well was the hospital patronized, that within a short time only about one-tenth of the applicants for admission could be received; hence, a new building was imperative. Through the hearty cooperation of the good citizens of Providence, a large structure was erected which is an ornament to their city and a testimonial of their good will and desire to preserve the traditional spirit of helpfulness to those in need.

There was one particular class of patients with whom the Sisters at Providence came in contact, whose sad condition appealed to them with particular force. It was those afflicted with tuberculosis, whose presence is not desirable in any hospital, as special provisions must be made in order to avoid the dreaded germs.

Under the guidance of Sister Eulalia, the Sisters realized the possibility of taking care of this class of poor sufferers by securing a separate institution where there would be greater facilities for effecting the cure of incipient cases, and for caring for those who had no reasonable hope of recovery.

When the Sisters took charge of St. Joseph's Hospital, Bishop Harkins had given them a farm at Hill's Grove from which they might obtain fresh milk, eggs, and butter for the use of the patients. This place, it was believed, would be an ideal one for the proposed hospital for consumptives. Accordingly, a rather medium-sized structure was erected and completed by September, 1904. Thither the tuberculosis cases at St. Joseph's Hospital were removed, and a number of others were admitted that could be conveniently cared for.

In the course of time, much has been done towards the relief of the poor victims of the dread disease; although it is regretted that the limited accommodations at Hill's Grove will not permit that more should receive the benefit of the skilled treatment and compassionate care of the Sisters and the able physicians who attend the sanitarium.

The last institution devoted to the care of the sick which Mother Agnes accepted in the East, was Georgetown University Hospital, which, as its name suggests, was founded as a training school for the medical students of the University. While the building is owned by the Jesuit Fathers, the care of the hospital is entrusted to the Sisters. These have spared no efforts in their years of service to keep the institution up to the high standard which its situation in the great capital city demands.

In its patronage there is a strange commingling of race and color, of wealth and poverty. While among its patients are often numbered the elite of Washington society—lawmakers, statesmen, and diplomats of foreign clime; yet, from the rich man's couch the humble daughter of St. Francis makes her way to the cot of poor "Lazarus," upon whom she lavishes a care no less tender.

2. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL
READING, PA.

3. ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

4. GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL
WASHINGTON, D. C.

CHAPTER 2

Orphanages

**". . . As for Himself the Infant Jesus
In His little ones asks food and rest."**

THE Catholic Church, it has been said, is a real mother. "She rocks her children in the cradle of infancy, and soothes them on the couch of death."

In no other work has she shown greater solicitude than in the care of those in the helpless innocence of childhood. For their service she has set aside her consecrated virgins, who, having foresworn all other love, with their whole heart can "mother" the children of strangers for the sake of Christ, their beloved Spouse, who has said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

The little homeless waif, as it first comes to the door of the orphanage, often with only a filthy covering of rags, perhaps with disease lurking in every tattered shred, and with a little heart already familiar with every form of vice, is not, humanly speaking, very attractive. If left to the mercy of the world, without the refining influences of religion or a safe hand to guide him, there awaits such as he in future years in all too many cases a place among the most degenerate outcasts of society. On the other hand, the little one may be rescued at a tender age when it may be blissfully ignorant of its "parentless fate," and when its little soul is yet in the lily-whiteness of innocent childhood. Both classes of children have called forth the noblest ambitions to engage in the splendid work of snatching from the cruel world the little lives, in which are concealed wonderful potentialities for development into noble manhood and womanhood.

While pagan nations were abandoning their orphan children to the most cruel fate, the Catholic Church conceived the plan of gathering her little ones into her bosom, and of entrusting them to the care of her chosen Daughters whose services were not to be secured for paltry gold, but for an eternal recompense. The world's great orphanages then arose; and with the progress of the ages they have been perfected, until today they have the semblance of refined homes.

Among the first works of the Sisters of St. Francis, we recall, was the care of homeless little outcasts, whom they brought into their own convent at Reed Street. Later in their mission at Tacony, albeit temporarily, they had renewed their interest in orphans. This work among Christ's little ones was indeed dear to the heart of Mother Agnes; and she was disposed that the Community should continue its interest in destitute childhood.

An opportunity presented itself when Bishop Becker made an appeal to the Sisters to open an institution in Wilmington, Del., to care for homeless boys of his diocese who were sadly neglected and in danger of losing their Faith. Mother Agnes needed no urging; and as the Sisters were already teaching in the diocese, there was no difficulty in arranging with Bishop Wood for them to undertake another mission.

There was not much delay in completing preparations for opening the home, as the special residence attached to St. James Church was decided upon as being a suitable place for beginning the work.

Sister Rosalia was assigned the superiorship, and with her were associated Sisters Leonarda and Assumpta. By the fall of 1879, all was in readiness for opening the home which was designated as St. James Protectory. The Sisters taught the orphan boys together with the children of St. James parish school, which was opened at the same time.

Bishop Becker was very much interested in the orphan asylum, and watched with eagerness every improvement which was made for the welfare of the children; but after seven years he was removed to Savannah, Ga. His successor, the Right Reverend Bishop Curtis, proved no less a kind father and friend to the boys. When the old building became too crowded for convenience and healthfulness, the good Bishop sought a more suitable location, and succeeded in securing at Reybold a well improved ninety-two acre farm upon which was a commodious dwelling. One can well imagine the joy with which the orphan boys submitted to a change from the crowded city home to the one in the country, where they were free from many of the restraints of urban life. With the addition of more boys to the home, even the capacious new building became in time too small. During Bishop Monaghan's administration, a new wing and a beautiful memorial chapel were added. The latter was the gift of Miss Elizabeth Andrews of Baltimore in memory of her sister, Catherine, to whom, by a strange coincidence, Bishop Monaghan had administered the last sacraments in far-off Rome.

For the progress of the work at Reybold, Mother Agnes was very solicitous, and gave her personal attention to the improvement of the grounds as she had done at Glen Riddle. It was her delight to be present at the gathering in of the harvest, and to assist in preserving and canning the fruit. Particularly interesting to Mother Agnes was the apple butter bee when the huge brass kettles were brought forth and placed in the yard over a bright fire, which the little lads vied with one another in tending. The older boys assisted in the work by stirring the boiling mass in the kettles. It was a pleasing sight to behold them at their task swaying back and forth rhythmically to their merry whistled tunes.

While the Sisters treasure happy memories of their work among the orphans at Reybold, how much greater must be the joy of the good angels of the little lads who have under the environment of a Christian home grown to noble manhood!

The next proof of the charity of Mother Agnes in the welfare of the needy was the establishment of a home in Roxbury, where both orphans and aged women are cared for. Here we find a strange meeting of the two extremes,—of youth with its hopeful anticipations of the future, and of old age in its pensive reflections of "old gardens, old roses and old loves." The Sisters also teach in the parish school, and thus their influence for good has been widely extended, and the results of their labors have been most commendable.

At the beginning of the year 1893, another opportunity presented itself for the Community to offer its service in behalf of destitute childhood in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Here the Sisters took charge of St. Mary's Home, which had been for years conducted by the Sisters of Charity. The work was placed under the direction of Sister de Sales. The orphanage was supported by voluntary contributions, and was for many years the only institution of its kind in the Diocese of Trenton. Within five years the number of children for whom admission was sought increased to such an extent that it was deemed advisable to erect a larger building at Hopewell, New Jersey. On the completion of the new orphanage known as St. Michael's, all the children over seven years of age were transferred thither, while the home at New Brunswick was continued as an infant asylum. In the year 1927, however, St. Mary's Home was discontinued.

The erection of the new orphanage was due largely to the efforts of Bishop O'Farrell, who had bought a well improved farm near Hopewell and had planned the building; but His Lordship did not have the happiness of seeing the fruition of his work, as death claimed him ere the building was begun. The good Bishop, however, made it possible that his friend and successor should find means to continue the work; for in his will there was $60,000 bequeathed as a nucleus of a fund for the benefit of the orphans. To this generous sum, Colonel Daniel Morris added $50,000, which gave him also a notable place among the orphans' friends.

St. Michael's was completed and dedicated by Bishop McFaul in May, 1898; and the Sisters began their work there under the direction of Sister de Sales, who retained her position for fifteen years, until her edifying death in 1913. As a testimonial of her valuable services, the press published a well earned appreciation of her work in the following article entitled, "A True Daughter of St. Francis:"

"There died the other day in St. Michael's Orphanage, Hopewell, N. J., a humble Sister, unknown to the world, the superioress of that institution, Sister M. de Sales, O. S. F. But though the world knew her not, though her name was never blazoned on the pages of its doings, the God of the orphan knew her, and her name is written in golden letters in the Book of Life. For years, late and early, her sole thought and care had been the homeless little ones whom the providence of God brought to her care. She lavished more than a mother's love upon them, for her human love was purified in the fires of Divine love, and became the pure gold of the spirit. For the orphans she lived; she strove; she labored. Those little ones to whom were opened her mother's arms, she clasped in her embrace, and made their young hearts rejoice by the fervor of her affection.

"Worn out by a disease that was slowly but surely undermining her constitution, she thought not of herself but only of her little wards. And as she lived and labored among them, a true daughter of St. Francis, so she died among them. We cannot help contrasting her silent energetic life and its work with that of the noisy suffragette. Hidden forces are the strongest and it will be a sad day for this troublous world when lives like that of Sister de Sales are unappreciated and swallowed up in the mad vortex that rumbles through sin and ruin to the visionary advantages of a ballot box."

The work so nobly begun by Sister de Sales is still continued by the Community under others equally devoted to their task. The maintenance of the home has been made possible through the soliciting of aid from day to day; and the orphans' prayer for "daily bread" has always disposed kind hearts to heed the appeal of those who ask alms for their little ones in Christ's name.

Another home which welcomed to its portals waifs and strays, the unfortunate outcasts of the city, was opened in New Bedford, Mass., in 1894. Here both boys and girls are equipped for the battle of life with a solid Catholic education, which includes for the boys a knowledge of vocational branches, and for the girls various forms of domestic science. Thus all are prepared to earn a livelihood and to become useful citizens.

St. Mary's Home, as it is called, is supported by the voluntary offerings of the good people of the city. The Portuguese population, who have prosperous farms in the vicinity, are particularly generous in their donations. On one occasion, it is related, four dark-visaged men came to the home one Sunday afternoon to present a calf which one of them bore on his shoulders. When the Sister portress answered their summons at the door, one of the good men explained in broken English that they had brought a little present "fur ti shilder."

Day after day the records of such simple acts of charity as this in behalf of the orphans are written by the Recording Angel in the Book of Life; and to the Eternal Throne rises the daily prayer of the little ones, "Vouchsafe, O Lord, for Thy name's sake to reward with eternal life all them that do us good."

CHAPTER 3

Homes for the Aged

"At the end of the course, they now rest worn out with old age."

Cicero and other panegyrists have expatiated with great eloquence upon old age, investing it with charms which perchance may lessen that natural dread of its approach inherent in every human heart. When amidst wealth and affluence, old age creeps on and feels neither the sting of poverty nor the desertion of friends, it is pathetic enough only to face the prospects of coming dissolution and the loss of all earthly possessions; but when at the end of life one finds oneself with shattered health and through misfortune a pauper, and thus a helpless outcast of society, there is no poet who can paint a pen picture that would call forth a thrill of admiration and make such a condition desirable.

It is for this class that the Church is tenderly provident, sympathizing with them in their affliction and supplying them with food and raiment and the shelter of a home, where often they enjoy more comforts than they ever provided for themselves in the days of their greatest prosperity. For their service, the Church again calls forth her army of virgins who with undivided love give themselves unreservedly to this blessed work of charity. Although most meritorious, this task of laboring among the aged poor is by no means naturally attractive. The care of helpless little orphans in the sweet innocence of childhood, has for us an appealing charm which divests labor of its irksomeness; but when, with youth and strength gone, the unfortunate victim of poverty finds himself forced to sit idly by and wait till the sun of life is set, with nothing to awaken enthusiasm or the joy of living, there is for his merciful assistant certainly no great thrill of natural satisfaction in her task, although it may perhaps savor more of the Divine.

It was in this noble work of assisting the needy that the Sisters of St. Francis had early interested themselves when they received into their little convent on Reed Street a number of aged women for whom they cared most tenderly.

Scarcely ten years after the purchase of the old seminary in

Glen Riddle, Mother Agnes' charity urged her to secure the property adjoining the convent grounds known as the Sinex Estate for the purpose of establishing there a home for the aged poor. As there was already a substantial house on the grounds, all was soon made ready for occupancy, and the home was blessed and dedicated to St. Elizabeth. Ere long the building was taxed to its utmost capacity, as its location was very desirable, and the care insured by the devoted Sisters was an incentive for seeking admittance to the Home.

For more than forty years, the work at the mother house at Glen Riddle was of dual character. Here, young aspiring members of the Community ably assisted in the care of the aged who were being schooled in the "novitiate of eternity," and learned from the consideration of the miseries of these poor dependents the sad results of unpreparedness for life's duties. Thus the necessity of being prepared themselves for their life work was doubly impressed upon them.

What a contrast in life was presented at Glen Riddle those many years! The young novice in the springtime of life with bright possibilities before her of both sowing and reaping in the Master's service, was suggestive of sweetest hope; while the aged tottering along with slow-timed pace and bending under the burden of years, with only memories of past happiness to cheer his way, presented a scene of melancholy pathos.

Another mission for the aged was established at Roxbury, Mass., as we have seen, where youth and old age met in kindly kinship, within the sheltering walls of St. Francis Home.

One of the crowning acts of Mother Agnes' long administration was the founding of still another institution at Lawrenceville, N. J., for the aged poor, in response to an appeal from the Right Reverend Bishop McFaul. The home was made possible by the magnificent legacy left by Captain Morris, who bequeathed property known as Morris Hall. This was soon put in readiness for the purpose designated by its donor; and when alterations were completed on the building, the Bishop requested Mother Agnes to take charge of the institution. In compliance with the wishes of His Lordship, the mission was accepted, and five Sisters were sent to open the Home in the spring of the year 1905.

1. ST. FRANCIS HOME
Roxbury, Mass.

3. MORRIS HALL
Lawrenceville, N. J.

2. ST. MICHAEL'S HOME
Hopewell, N. J.

4. ST. JAMES PROTECTORY
Reybold, Del.

For a quarter of a century the work has been continued, and many a poor person worn out by the infirmities of old age, has found rest and shelter within the peaceful home at Morris Hall. Many a prayer, too, from grateful hearts has been directed to Heaven by the old people for their kind benefactors who, we trust, may long since have obtained from the "Giver of all gifts" the blessedness promised to those who are merciful to others.

CHAPTER 4

Parish Schools

"'Tis education forms the common mind,
And as the twig is bent, the tree's
inclined."

"IF we work upon marble it will perish," says the great orator whose eloquence shook the halls of Congress in his defense of liberty and union; "if we rear temples they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds, if we imbue them with principles, with the just fear of God and love of our fellowmen, we engrave upon those tablets something that will brighten to all eternity."

No one need to ask the question, "Is it worth while?" Even those outside the "true fold" recognize the urgent need of religious education. The sentiments of Guizot, a prominent writer of France, may be learned from his words, "In order to make popular education truly good and socially useful, it must be fundamentally religious."

"It is necessary," he continues, "that national education should be given and received in the midst of a religious atmosphere, and that religious impression and religious observances should penetrate into all its parts."

The beloved Father of Our Country, convinced by his own observations of the necessity of religious education, declares, "Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles."

Woodrow Wilson forcibly expresses his views when he says, "Our civilization cannot survive materially unless we are redeemed spiritually." And President Coolidge again emphasizes the same fact when he writes, "There is no power on earth except religion that can meet and solve the manifold and threatening problems that confront us today."

It is the Catholic Church that down through the ages has always solved these "threatening problems," and it is this same power that will continue her beneficent work for humanity till time shall be no more. In her mission among men, she must teach those truths which Christ has entrusted to her keeping, and in this sacred duty, the Catholic Sisterhoods have their share.

The task of a Christian teacher is a laborious one. Like the tapestry weavers, she may seem to be working on the "wrong side evermore;" for seldom does she see the fruit of her labors, as she passes on one class after the other in her years of service. The glory of the teacher, however, like that of the patient weaver, can be conceived only when the task is completed. The little ones of today are the men and women of tomorrow; and as the teacher is, so will the future citizens be. Cast upon the great sea of life, where even the keeping of the Commandments is at times difficult, many a storm-tossed child of the Church has for its only plank of safety the memory of the simple lessons of Faith taught by the kind and gentle Sister in the innocent days of his childhood; and even after years of estrangement from God, these lessons may be recalled through the prayers of a devoted teacher for her erring children.

When it was first intimated to the Sisters of St. Francis that their apostolate was to include the instruction of youth in parish schools, they might reasonably have questioned the advisability of accepting the work, as the number in the Community was yet small and there seemed to be no one to spare from the duties in which they were then engaged. But the voice of authority plainly indicated that they should undertake the work of teaching, and Mother Francis quietly took charge of St. Alphonsus School and she herself became one of its first teachers.

The services of the Sisters were soon sought in other parishes, so that the work of education was to be by no means among the least of the activities of the Community, even in Mother Francis' day.

Mother Agnes' views in regard to the preparation of the child for future citizenship were in accord with those of the Church authorities, who insisted on the establishment of parish schools where religion might be taught under Catholic influence.

When, therefore, zealous pastors appealed for Sisters to take charge of schools, Mother Agnes gladly responded whenever possible.

Both the academic and professional training of the Community teachers was early provided for, so that the Sisters of St. Francis were soon ranked among the leading Sisterhoods engaged in teaching.

While Mother Agnes gave her attention to the founding of hospitals and homes for the aged and the orphan, she was especially interested in the work of parish schools; as may be learned from the fact that no less than forty-two of the seventy-one school missions now under the control of the Community were established during her term of office.

Of these missions some still retain their primitive simplicity, while others through development of the surroundings bear little resemblance to the small beginnings of long ago.

One of the first schools accepted by Mother Agnes is of particular interest. This was St. Bonifacius School in St. Clair, Pa., the little village where she was baptized and confirmed only sixteen years previously. We may reasonably conclude that it was with great joy that Mother Agnes accepted this mission, as it would always be associated with sacred memories of her spiritual life.

While the Sisters of St. Francis will ever cherish St. Clair, Pa., as the spiritual birthplace of their beloved Mother Agnes, they may likewise recall that the mission undertaken there was the "training school" of a remarkable member of the Community who was destined also to hold the office of superior general at a later day. This was none other than Reverend Mother Stanislaus, whose probationary period was partly spent in this lowly field of labor.

To Sister Ludigardis had been assigned the superiorship of the school, and with her were associated two novices, one of whom was Sister Stanislaus, formerly Miss Mary Bittenbender. Long had the pious young girl looked forward to the day when she might be a daughter of St. Francis, and at the early age of fifteen she left her home in Locust Gap, Pa., to seek admittance to the Philadelphia Community. When she presented herself at the convent on Reed Street, Mother Agnes was favorably impressed with the earnest appearance of the young girl, and did not hesitate to receive her. Of her novitiate days, nothing else is recorded except that she was singularly humble and obedient. It was these qualities which recommended her to Mother Agnes' consideration when selecting the personnel for the proposed mission at St. Clair.

As the work of the Sisters was among the poor, they too had to endure the privations of poverty. In their little home they had scarcely the necessaries of life and were often obliged to devise means "to keep the wolf from the door." In order to add to their meagre income, they resorted to making paper flowers at night after they were free from school duties; but as there was no proportion between the labor of making these artificial blossoms and the price at which they sold, there was no appreciable amount of money earned.

It was soon evident that Sister Stanislaus was well qualified for coping with the difficulties attendant upon the work at the new mission, although her youth and inexperience seemed in the beginning to preclude the possibility of her being able to maintain discipline in the classroom to which she was assigned for duty. From the first she seems to have been impressed with the fact that God would bless whatever was undertaken in His name through obedience to superiors. With this confidence in God, she sought strength and courage to do the work assigned her. What seemed to cause most uneasiness was that the pastor, Father Dornhege, might find out that she was younger than some of her pupils, and object to her remaining. Daily, we are told, as she entered the classroom before school hours, she knelt down and prayed with extended arms that God would bless the work of the day; and in her simplicity she added to the prayer the plea that Father Dornhege might not inquire about her age. God heard the prayer of His humble child who had cast all her care upon Him, and she acquired such remarkable tact in classroom management that nothing was said about her age. The good spirit of the young novice in bearing the many trials which resulted from poverty and her own inexperience, merited for her the approbation of her superiors, who, in future years, felt justified in entrusting to her greater responsibilities.

Considering the fact that St. Clair, Pa., is associated with the names of two religious who held the highest superiorship in the Order, there is perhaps no other small mission which is historically so important as St. Bonifacius'. Of the little village of St. Clair we could say as they did of Bethlehem of old that it was the least among cities. Its inhabitants were poor working people, and there was no industry which could be developed from year to year to increase its prominence. Three Sisters were sent to open the school and only three are employed there today after a lapse of more than half a century.

Sacred Heart School in Allentown, founded the same year, had in the beginning no greater prospects for advancement. At its inception, almost sixty years ago, the mission was cared for likewise by only three Sisters; while today the school stands in the midst of a flourishing city, and the little band of teachers has increased to thirty.

With St. Mauritius School at Ashland, Pennsylvania, opened in 1874, are associated memories of the terrible scourge of black smallpox which fell upon the village and the surrounding country in the year 1883. The school was closed and the Sisters set themselves to the task of administering to their suffering neighbors.

In answer to an appeal from the Board of Health, Mother Agnes sent several capable nurses among whom was Sister Judith. In one place a barn was converted into a pest house, and there for twenty-two weeks, Sister stayed at her post, alone and unaided. The hayloft was the only available place to which she might retire for a little rest from time to time. There, too, she partook of the frugal meals which were cautiously passed in to her by kind friends.

As is usual in times of such disaster, remarkable conversions are recorded of those stricken with the loathsome disease. One instance was that of a Presbyterian minister who remarked that in case he should take sick he would rather have the devil take care of him than the Sisters. That very night he contracted the disease and as a consequence was deserted by his wife and family who feared contagion. At the urgent request of the Board of Health, Sister Judith went to the house of the minister and found him in a deplorable condition as he had had no attention for a week. All that was possible was done to relieve the sufferer, and in a few days he began to recover. With returning health came a change of attitude towards the Sister who had cared for him in spite of his ingratitude. He finally became truly contrite and avowed that he would endeavor to do all in his power to repair all the evil he had done against Catholics on account of their religion.

How joyfully must St. Francis have looked down upon his Daughters administering to the plague-stricken, in order to win their souls to Christ, just as he and his devoted brethren had done at the leper settlements around Assisi. He who will not suffer to go unrewarded a cup of water will treasure up the heroic deeds performed in His name by His faithful Spouses as so many jewels to adorn the crowns that await them in His Heavenly Kingdom.

Of the school missions of the Community, the one in St. Elizabeth's Parish, Philadelphia, is among those which have made the most notable material progress. Fifty-six years ago, Sister Helena and two Sisters were sent to open the school which then gave little promise of its future importance. With the succession to the pastorate of zealous priests who were interested in Christian education, attractive school surroundings were provided which made residence in that part of the city desirable. As the Catholic population increased, a demand was created for better accommodations for the school children; so that, in 1903, a substantial new building was erected which is a magnificent testimonial to the zeal of the good pastor, Father Dornhege, and to the co-operation of the parishioners of St. Elizabeth's.

A more commodious convent was also provided for the Sisters whose number has been augmented until there is now a band of twenty-four teachers on duty at the school, where only three once sufficed.

What a wonderful development! What could three Sisters now accomplish at the mission? Sister Helena, the first superior, after years of service in the far distant West has gone to her reward, while one of her co-laborers, Sister Antonia, is still in active service, and has witnessed with joy that the seed sown in primitive days in the unpromising soil of the little Philadelphia mission amidst hardships and disappointments, has yielded an abundant harvest.

The little parish school at Lock Haven, Pa., in the region of the Allegheny Mountains, has interwoven with its history records of dire disaster which has made life at the mission very hazardous. Here the lordly Susquehanna, flowing majestically through the valley, sometimes loses its dignified character owing to the block-

1. HOLY GHOST SCHOOL
South Bethlehem, Pa.

2. ST. ELIZABETH'S SCHOOL
Philadelphia, Pa.

3. IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL
Trenton, N. J.

ing of ice in a bend of the river and rushes wildly beyond its borders, respecting neither persons nor places in its destructive course.

It is now nearly fifty years since three Sisters under the direction of Sister Evangelista were established in this little village where they opened St. Agnes School. Although the convent was built in the more elevated part of the city, it is not so high as to be beyond the reach of the disastrous floods that occasionally deluge the valley. One of the most memorable of these visitations was in the month of February, 1918, when the river in its rampage forced its waters over even those places that had hitherto been considered quite out of the reach of its destructive power. This time the Sisters at the convent suffered the same fate their unfortunate neighbors had often met before, and experienced likewise the miseries that befall those under such dire circumstances. From an account written by one of the victims of the disaster, we learn that the first danger appeared about five o'clock in the evening. Within half an hour the cellar was full of water and the fire in the furnace was extinguished. By eight o'clock nearly two feet of water was in the rooms on the first floor. All that could be removed quickly was taken to the attic, and the heavier articles were left on the second floor. Crowded in the little garret, the Sisters witnessed the gradual rise of the water without any assurance as to how far it was going to come. As it was in the midst of winter, the cold added to their discomfort. Finally, after their endurance was taxed almost up to the limit, the Sisters saw the water gradually fall until they were able to venture to the floors below. One can scarcely imagine the sight they beheld as they entered the once cozy little rooms of the convent whose walls were soaked in the murky waters of the turbulent river which even then gave no assurance that its depredations were completed. Benumbed with cold, they swept out the ice and water that still remained, and bravely set to work to make everything as presentable as circumstances would permit. As it was not possible to make a fire the dampness added to their discomfort. Neither was there any way of cooking the provisions that had been hastily snatched from the cellar. A thoughtful neighbor, however, came to their rescue by wading through the mud and water to bring them an oil stove.

This they made use of until normal conditions in the house were restored.

Thus we see that life in Lock Haven is not the most desirable, and that the Sisters who are appointed for duty at St. Agnes School have to share the hardships of those among whom they labor. But through the goodness of God, amidst all the perils to which they have been exposed since the foundation of the mission, a merciful Providence has prevented any serious injury to the Sisters who, trusting in the Divine protection, still pursue their work.

The history of the forty-two school missions founded by Mother Agnes alone, would make interesting volumes. Each has its separate record of trials and triumphs in the work of preparing the little ones of the flock for their well-being in this world and in the life to come; and each one who has shared in the labor of instructing others unto justice may indeed hope to share likewise in the promised reward.

CHAPTER 5

Negro Missions

> "Above our broken dreams and plans
> God lays with wiser hand that man's
> The corner stones of liberty."

THE sailing of the little Dutch ship up the James River, in 1619, bearing her human cargo of African slaves to be sold to the English planters, was an event insignificant at the time, but which in future years was to have momentous consequences, so great indeed, as to threaten the very existence of the republic whose successful struggle against her oppressors had entitled her to be designated as the land of liberty.

As the years passed, considerations of the wretched condition of the negro engaged the attention of thoughtful and fair-minded men, who proposed various means for offsetting the growing evils of slavery. But not until the appearance of the great President who had the courage to pen the lines of the Emancipation Proclamation was a definite measure taken that led to the final issue which made the United States truly the land of the free.

With the admission of the emancipated negro to full rights of citizenship, new duties devolved upon the nation in educating and evangelizing her new subjects. These tasks were left largely to the charity of individuals and of various religious organizations. The Catholic Church, too, has her share in the glory of the work, although her progress has been slow in this home mission field, as may be seen from the fact that out of a total population of ten million, only about two per cent are Catholic. The reasons for this are very obvious, for in slavery times, the rule of the plantation was, "Like master, like man;" so that the religion of the slave was that of his owner, and this same faith was handed down from one generation to the other. As the South was then, and is still, intensely Protestant, a vast majority of the negroes belonged to various sects. Only Maryland and Louisiana were originally settled by Catholics; hence, in those States the colored Catholic population in the United States is centered today.

The negro, happy and care free, is at the same time intensely religious. And while he is naturally impressionable and easily influenced by environment, he clings tenaciously to the Catholic Faith when once he has been thoroughly convinced of the truth.

That so little has been done in mission work among the colored people is due to several reasons. As there are few Catholics in the South, it would be very difficult for a negro to persevere in the practice of his religion in the midst of bigoted Protestant neighbors. Again, the extreme poverty of the negroes renders it quite impossible to contribute sufficient for the support of a priest, and much less for the maintenance of a school.

Notwithstanding these hindrances to mission work, there have been heroic efforts to bring into the Fold this unfortunate race, the record of whose long captivity forms some of the darkest pages in the history of our country.

"If there be a solution for the negro problem," says Father Lord, "it is in the Church, which knows neither race nor color, bondage nor freedom, but gathers all to the brotherhood in Christ."

It is the glory of the Franciscan Order to number among its heroic members whose lives have been sanctified outside of the sphere of great opportunities, Benedict Labre, a negro slave whose elevation to the altars of the Church proves conclusively to the world that holiness of life is within the reach of all, and recalls the truth of the words,

"Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part, there all the honor lies."

In order to assist the negroes of our country to "act well" their part in the great drama of American life, the Sisters of St. Francis in the fall of the year 1890, entered the "colored harvest field" by taking charge of St. Peter Claver's School in Baltimore at the request of Rev. Father Welbers. The thoroughly Catholic parish that has resulted is an evidence of the successful work of the Sisters who have found their labors among the negro children not only pleasant but profitable as well.

In the same year, Father de Ruyter who had been given charge of the colored Catholics of Wilmington made a request to Mother Agnes for Sisters to teach the children of his parish. The mission was accepted, and Sister Thomasina was assigned to the superiorate with two novices, Sisters Ermelina and Corsina, as her assistants.

On the first day of school, Father de Ruyter succeeded in coaxing nine little darkies to go to the classrooms. As the home atmosphere of the children was not Catholic, it required considerable persuasion to prevail upon them to remain and to apply themselves to duty. One day after rather an unsuccessful attempt in maintaining discipline, Sister Ermelina returned from her labors quite discouraged and was making her way to chapel to obtain light and strength in her difficulties, when she met Father de Ruyter. Thinking that something unusual had occurred in school, Father asked, "Were the children naughty today, Sister?" To this question Sister replied that nothing could ever be done with the children unless the Sisters could have entire supervision of them; for what was done at school was undone at home. A refractory girl, Sister informed Father, had asserted that afternoon, "My Aunt Jane says I don't have to min' what dem Caflik Sistahs says;" and had obstinately refused to do the tasks assigned her. To this information Father replied that it might be possible to provide a home where the children could remain with the Sisters all the time. This was the first inspiration for St. Joseph's Colored Home.

Two years later, Father de Ruyter gave up his new residence for the use of colored orphan boys, and he himself moved into the little convent which the Sisters had been occupying. Thus unwittingly, the disobedient little negro girl's "Aunt Jane" indirectly inaugurated the work among destitute colored children in the Wilmington diocese.

The first inmates of the Home were six bright little colored boys ranging from four to six years of age, who had been cared for at a girls' orphanage in Baltimore for some time. It was an interesting band of darkies. The Sisters soon learned that they had good voices and taught them to sing. So marked was their progress that within a few months two of the little lads, Jimmy Pink and Albert Brown, each five years of age, were able to sing the solos at High Mass. Jimmy Pink, especially, made rapid progress in every line of work and was well worth teaching, and became in time a valuable assistant at the Home. So trustworthy was he that he was given the task of prefecting the boys and many other important offices. When Jimmy Pink was present in Church at High Mass, there was need of neither organist nor choir, as he could do both the playing and the singing himself. He was quite as proficient in cooking, and could prepare a meal that would tempt an epicure.

After he left the orphanage, he was happily married to an estimable colored girl. God blessed this home with several bright little "Pinks" and the family became one of the most prominent in St. Joseph's Parish. Not only Jimmy Pink has brought joy to his teachers. There are others of St. Joseph's Home who have been quite as influential in upholding Catholicity among the colored people, and have well repaid their benefactors for the interest taken in their welfare.

In 1892, a large new building was erected for the orphans; and four years later, the boys of St. Joseph's Home over fourteen years of age were transferred to Clayton, Delaware. The Sisters of St. Francis continued their interest in the colored orphan boys by assuming charge of the domestic department in the new institution at Clayton known as St. Joseph's Industrial School. Here Father de Ruyter planned to have a trade school similar to that in Tuskegee, Ala. At first the boys occupied a small building but within two years, Father had ten buildings erected to be used as church, school, workshops, and living quarters. In the enterprise the boys assisted the mechanics as apprentices, and not only acquired valuable knowledge but also considerably lessened expenses by their labor. Provision was made for the boys to learn tailoring, furniture making, printing, and shoemaking. The institution thus became a great factor in preparing the boys for becoming intelligent and useful citizens.

The erection of the buildings was made possible through liberal donations from Mother Katherine Drexel and her sister, Mrs. Morrell, whose generosity on this and other occasions places them among the unfailing friends of the colored people of our country. Father de Ruyter magnanimously gave not only his own personal services, but his patrimony as well for the upbuilding of the institutions at Clayton and Wilmington; and it was while laboring for the perfection of the work that his heroic life came to a close.

In May, 1928, all the children of the orphanage in Wilmington were transferred to Clayton and the building was altered to serve as a parish school. With the addition of equipment, St. Joseph's Colored School is one of the best in the city, and is loyally supported by the colored Catholics of Wilmington.

The maintenance of St. Joseph's Home in primitive days was a serious problem. There were only a few Catholics among the colored people and these were poor laborers who could give no material assistance. Food and clothing for the children could be obtained only by soliciting; and this task had to be performed by the little band of Sisters in addition to their labors in the classroom and elsewhere. Those who have had experience in soliciting know full well the disappointments attendant upon the work. A Sister relates of one of her first experiences that a request for food for the little darkies at St. Joseph's was met with the insulting reply, "Why don't you work for your living?" So irate was the vegetable vender of whom she had asked assistance, that he gave further expression to his indignation by throwing a ripe tomato at her as she passed on her way to the other stalls in the market. The blow was well aimed and the ripe tomato spattered its contents on Sister's veil and added to her chagrin. It was a severe test for a young religious; but Sister was too courageous to allow her spirit to be broken by such an experience and continued her humble task. Others more kindly disposed filled her basket to overflowing, so that she returned home rejoicing, not only that her little charges were well provided for, but also that she had been found worthy to suffer reproach for Christ who has promised, "Blessed are you when they shall revile you and persecute you and speak all that is evil against you untruly for My sake."

ST. FRANCIS ACADEMY
BAKER, OREGON

ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL
BAKER, OREGON

PART VII

Westward Bound

CHAPTER

1. Among the Blue Mountains of Oregon.
2. In the Land of the Golden Grain.
3. On Far Pacific Shores.
4. Missions Among the Indians.

CHAPTER 1

Among the Blue Mountains of Oregon

"Where the tints of the earth and the hues of the sky
In color though varied in beauty may vie."

WHEN men, urged on by the magic lure of securing gold and other treasures that lay hidden in the great West, heaped all their worldly possessions on an emigrant wagon, and traveled heedless of danger over pathless prairies to the land of the setting sun, others in search of immortal souls, untrammeled by any earthly burden, likewise threaded their way past forbidding barriers with an intrepidity equally as great.

While the adventurous pioneer explorers of these wild regions have their names emblazoned on the pages of history, many a saintly missionary is unremembered save through the legends of the red men who have received from their progenitors the story of his heroic life.

The Lewis and Clark expedition at the threshold of the nineteenth century, had opened up the way to the vast territory which Bryant characterized in his lines as

". . . the continuous wood
Where rolls the Oregon."

There the Church, in 1838, established an ecclesiastical province when Father Blanchet was given jurisdiction over the vast Oregon Territory. With high hopes of winning souls to God, this pious priest journeyed from Quebec to the Rocky Mountains. He was joined on the way by Father Demers. When he reached his destination, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered up on the lonely heights; and the majestic mountains and "abrupt peaks" were consecrated to God.

On their arrival at French Prairie in the Willamette Valley, the priests found twenty-four families, many of whom were fallen-away Catholics. Many of these had contracted marriages with pagans, and their children were being reared in ignorance of the truths of religion. A little log church was erected by the faithful; and in 1839 the first Mass in Oregon was celebrated in this humble structure which was dedicated to St. Paul.

In consideration of the marvelous success of his labors, Father Blanchet, who had been named Vicar Apostolic of the Oregon missions, may justly be regarded as the Apostle of the West. Through his influence, in the short space of six years, nearly six thousand pagan Indians were brought to the Faith; nine missions established; eleven churches and chapels erected; and one thousand Canadians saved from the imminent peril of losing their Faith.

But the glorious day of Oregon's missions was to be clouded with reverses. At the time of the gold discovery in California, whole settlements flocked to the new Eldorado, so that once flourishing missions were abandoned. Archbishop Blanchet, who, on account of financial reverses, went to South America in 1857 to solicit aid, found on his return, after an absence of two years, that all the religious communities had withdrawn, all the schools had been closed, and that the number of clergy had been decreased from nineteen to seven.

With the elevation of Oregon to statehood in 1859, when greater security was given to the scattered settlers, a new era began. Many who had passed through the fertile valleys of Oregon on their way to the gold regions of the South, realized the great potentialities of the agricultural industry. After a disappointing search for gold, they turned their attention to the more sure prospect of enriching themselves through the cultivation of the rich fields along the Columbia and Willamette rivers, which lay with their primeval fertility undisturbed. Ere long people began to realize, too, that rich mineral deposits lay hidden in the vast mountain regions, and that the forests promised wonderful possibilities. With the assurance of future prosperity, settlers hastened to avail themselves of the golden opportunities awaiting them; and soon little villages sprang up along the emigrant trails.

The Church, watchful to regain her former prestige, established missions and schools among these pioneer settlers; and steady growth in Catholicity kept pace with the increasing population and the ensuing prosperity.

With the establishment of Catholic educational institutions, the future of the Church was secure; for, as Archbishop Ireland says, "Catholic schools alone will perpetuate among us that richness of Faith, that fullness of spirituality which is the very essence of Catholic life."

In accordance with the spirit of St. Francis, whose charity urged him to send his disciples to distant fields of labor, we find the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, at the request of Archbishop Gross, entering the great western mission field in 1885, and establishing a school among the Blue Mountains of Eastern Oregon. This was at Baker City, a little mining town, which, like many other western villages, had been built up hastily on account of the discovery of gold. In the spring of 1875, the Sisters of the Holy Names had opened here an academy for the children of the pioneer settlers. For nine years the school prospered, when the Sisters, by reason of severe and unforeseen trials, deemed it necessary to withdraw, and the academy was closed.

In consideration of this condition of affairs, it was with great diffidence that Archbishop Gross asked Mother Agnes to undertake the mission where the Sisters would have to contend with the same difficulties which had baffled the efforts of their predecessors. Mother Agnes met with great opposition from the more conservative members of the Community; but, after weighing the objections prayerfully and carefully, the urgent solicitations of the Archbishop seemed to outweigh all difficulties, and preparations were begun for the opening of the mission.

We can but represent in fancy the enthusiasm aroused by the announcement of the proposed Western foundation, and the interest manifested in who would be chosen for the new field of labor. In spite of the spirit of indifference which each strove to acquire, natural timidity urged many a fervent Sister to hope that the choice might not fall upon her. But the unerring eye of Mother Agnes easily discerned those who would have sufficient courage to carry on the work successfully; and the events of future years proved that she was indeed inspired in her choice. Five were at last selected—five youthful, hopeful souls, who in the eyes of those less discerning might have been considered lacking in experience and ability to cope with the difficulties of an undertaking whose outcome was so uncertain. With reverence we pen the names of this first

Western mission band, Sister Stanislaus, Sister Angelica, Sister Marcella, Sister de Pazzi, and Sister Ferdinand. All but the last mentioned are now reaping in eternity the reward of their years of sacrifice.

Upon Sister Stanislaus devolved the duty of superiorship. Almost fifteen years had passed since the beginning of her religious career at the little mission at St. Clair, Pa. As Sister Stanislaus had gained much experience which showed both her solid spiritual character and unusual administrative ability, she was quite capable, Mother Agnes felt assured, of directing successfully the work of the distant mission.

On the twenty-fourth of August, 1885, the little band of Western missionaries met at Broad Street Station in Philadelphia. Apparently, there were no anxious fears about the future, as each one in simplicity had answered the call of obedience, and with calm confidence in God, trusted all to His merciful Providence. Mother Agnes was there, too, to give a last word of encouragement to her spiritual daughters, and to exhort them to be faithful children of St. Francis. There were no Pullman car reservations made for these poor Daughters of St. Francis, nor was dining car service thought consistent with their rigid observance of poverty; so, with the prospect of sitting up in a chair car for nearly a week, and eating a cold lunch, there was not much comfort anticipated. Hastily, farewells were said; and the little emotions that rise unbidden were bravely checked as the Sisters gathered together their few bundles of earthly possessions, and departed on the long journey that was to bear them far away from the religious home circle to which they might perhaps never return.

At that distant day—nearly half a century ago—there were still evidences of primitive life in the West. Herds of buffalo could be seen at times fleeing from the approaching train in wild confusion; and roving bands of Indians in war paint and feathers moved hither and thither along the streams where they met with the least resistance in their search for food. In addition to these novel sights were those of nature,—the great rivers forcing their way seaward over the broad prairies; the majestic panorama of mountains whose lofty peaks glistened as the bright rays of the August sun lighted up their snowy summits; the long stretches of grassy plains interspersed with green woodlands which refreshed the wayfarer by their cooling shades. This variety of scenery proved a pleasant diversion for our Sister travelers on the way to the Far West; and as the end of the journey approached, no one seemed very considerably fatigued from the discomfort experienced in traveling.

On their arrival at Baker City, they were welcomed by Father De Roo, the pastor of the little Catholic flock, and conducted to their future home, the building which had formerly served as the Sisters' convent. Here they were met by several kind-hearted Catholic women, among whom were Mrs. Lachner, Mrs. Packwood, and Mrs. Bowen, who had anticipated their coming, and had made the house as homelike as possible with the limited means at their command. The cordial greeting which they received made the Sisters feel that they were indeed among friends who were eager to assist them in the difficult task of initiating their new undertaking. A few weeks were diligently spent in preparing for the opening of school and for the receiving of a few resident pupils.

When all that their limited resources would permit had been done, there was still so much lacking that their convent must certainly have met the approval of Lady Poverty whose friendship St. Francis had earnestly urged his followers to seek. But as the Sisters had not come to the Far West for a pleasure trip nor to improve their health, the little inconveniences that resulted from their poor surroundings were endured, if not with joy, at least with patience.

The institution which had formerly been designated as Notre Dame Academy was rededicated to St. Francis; and the work of education so nobly initiated under the patronage of Our Lady by the pioneer Sisters of the Holy Names, was continued under that of her devoted client, the Seraphic Saint of Assisi.

On the first Sunday that the Sisters attended Mass, only six persons besides themselves were present; so one may infer that the Catholics were not much concerned about observing the precepts of the Church, as it was quite probable that the stay-at-homes were more numerous than those present.

Notwithstanding the unfavorable outlook, when school opened, sixty children presented themselves for enrollment, three of whom were resident pupils.

Before the close of the school year, Mother Agnes rejoiced the hearts of her spiritual children by making her first visitation to the West, bringing with her two recruits, Sister Cupertino and Sister Anselma. While there seemed to be bright prospects of a fruitful harvest in the new field of labor, the Sisters had already become aware of the great trials that awaited them and threatened disaster, were it not for the special intervention of Divine Providence. Mother Agnes' first visit was indeed timely, as her counsels of patient and humble endurance and confidence in God's mercy proved very salutary in the days of distress that followed. In God's own time, the dark clouds which hovered over the lonely little band were dispersed, and the bright sun of His love beamed forth to cheer and give them renewed hope.

Archbishop Gross, on his first visit to the convent in Baker City, assured the Sisters of his kind and paternal interest in their welfare. He was most solicitous for the success of their work as he realized what it meant to the future of Catholicity to have the Faith firmly planted in the hearts of the children. His Grace, even as a Redemptorist rector, had been "an indefatigable promoter of the training of the young," but now that he had assumed the responsibility of the episcopal dignity, his zeal for Christian education was still more marked.

As the diocese over which he presided was vast in extent, he was very much occupied in visiting his scattered flock. His mission was among the poor, and with them he shared the discomforts of poverty. Railroad building in the interior of Oregon was at that time only a dream of the distant future; hence, travel along the unfrequented trails was attended with great hardships. In speaking of his experiences before his first visit to Rome in 1889, His Grace says: "Four years have passed, years of labor and toil. I have traveled on horseback and buckboard, and camped out, going to sleep to the music of the coyotes' howl and under the broad canopy of the sky."

At the termination of the long journeys across the State, he unfailingly stopped at the convent in Baker City, where he was most heartily welcomed by the Sisters. His prudent counsels were much valued; and the sight of the Archbishop, worn out by ceaseless labors and cares, inspired the Sisters with courage to bear their own burdens with greater resignation.

Of one of these visits an amusing incident is related. He had been traveling all day through the heat, and the alkali dust, which rose in great clouds as his steed galloped along, was deposited generously upon his broad-brimmed hat and linen duster. It was already after nightfall when he reached Baker City. Tired and weary from lack of food and rest, he went at once to the convent. As his visit was unannounced, he found no one awaiting his arrival. Having hitched his horse at the front gate, he went around to the kitchen door where there was a light still burning. He rapped, and as it was an hour when visitors were not expected, the Sister who answered the summons opened the door very cautiously, just far enough to behold the form of a man and to hear the oft repeated request for something to eat. Hastily the Sister closed the door. In a few minutes Sister reappeared with a little lunch wrapped up in a newspaper, which she timidly handed the "poor man." Instead of the customary "thank you," the good Sister heard a familiar voice which said, "Sister Marcella, don't you know your Archbishop?" The reader may well imagine the apology which followed, and the efforts to make amends for the apparent discourtesy to the humble Prelate. His Grace laughed heartily over the little deception which he had practiced so successfully; and good Sister Marcella had to hear the story of how she "entertained angels unawares" related many a time afterwards.

After the academy had successfully continued its work for three years, a notable day in its progress was reached when it could confer upon three of its pupils the honors of graduation. The happy trio, who had looked forward to this great day of school girl life, were Edith Packwood, Katherine Lachner, and Margaret Griffin. Miss Packwood, whose good mother was among the first to welcome the Sisters to their new home in the West, became the wife of Mr. J. L. Rand, a prominent lawyer of Baker City, who at the present time is one of the justices of the Supreme Court of Oregon. Among St. Francis Alumnæ, Mrs. Rand is on the honor roll with those in whom have been exemplified the beautiful virtues of true Catholic womanhood. Katherine Lachner was the daughter of

Mrs. Joseph Lachner, another firm friend of the Sisters, who greeted them on their arrival in Baker City. In this amiable girl were blended all those charms that characterize the convent girl—charms that won the admiration of Mr. Foster, who claimed her for his bride soon after her graduation. Her happy home life was, however, of short duration; for the Angel of Death came to take her away to a happier home; and St. Francis Academy now numbers her among its first alumnæ in Heaven. Miss Griffin soon after leaving school was married to Mr. John Dooley and continued to reside in Baker City. Mrs. Dooley is one of the glories of St. Francis Alumnæ, as she enjoys the unique distinction of having given to the academy four lovely daughters. As the sweet girl graduates assemble from year to year, it is an inspiring sight to behold among their number this remarkable mother and her daughters, each one of whom has by her fidelity to God and her devotion to duty made stronger the bonds that unite her to her Alma Mater.

While in God's design it is His will that the great majority of those who go forth from convent halls should serve Him in the ordinary ranks as home builders, now and then He inspires some with the desire to consecrate themselves to His special service. The little Western mission in Baker was the nursery of such chosen souls, as we learn that among the graduates of pioneer days, an admirable young girl, Zella Bailey, a convert to the Faith, sought admission to the Community soon after her graduation. Sister Fernando, as she was known in religion, was admirably endowed by Heaven with a brilliant intellect and a charming personality. To these qualities were added those extraordinary spiritual gifts that characterized her as a devoted daughter of St. Francis. Sister was by nature an artist, and with special advantages of study under the best masters, her progress was remarkable. Her many sacred paintings that hang in convent halls, reveal not only the touch of a superior artist, but also the beauty of the religious soul who was in close touch with the Great Artist who guided her hand to impress upon her work a special spiritual character. Only a short span of nine years of convent life was allotted to this gifted soul, when God willed that she should lay

REVEREND MOTHER MARY STANISLAUS, O. S. F.

down the palette and brush she had used so well for His glory, although her work seemed scarcely begun.

Other girl graduates of St. Francis Academy have likewise heeded Christ's call for laborers in the Western missions; and by their valuable service in hospitals, schools, and orphanages are continuing the work initiated by the pioneer band who braved the hardships of primitive days in Eastern Oregon.

Only seven years had passed when the increasing number of pupils at the academy necessitated the securing of a larger school building. Accordingly, the Virtue property which was then the most attractive in town, was purchased and alterations were made to suit its new purpose. Even this within eight more years proved to be entirely inadequate for the number who applied for admission. A new building was then planned which resulted in the erection of the present imposing structure which is an architectural ornament to Eastern Oregon. A new era of progress then opened for St. Francis Academy and today it ranks among the leading educational institutions of the State.

The work of the academy during the forty-five years of its existence has been singularly blessed by God, through the continued co-operation of earnest, self-sacrificing Sisters who have ever found inspiration in the remembrance of the valiant pioneers. Special commendation for valuable service is due to no other more than to Sister Stanislaus, under whose guidance and inspiration the work was initiated. While she possessed the natural qualities of tact and special aptitude for dealing with difficult situations, it was pre-eminently the superior gifts of constancy in prayer and fidelity to her spiritual duties that most of all commended her to the consideration of her superiors when they appointed her to direct the affairs of the Western mission. Long accustomed as she had been to pray in the calm as well as in the storm, every affair was first recommended to God, and a happy outcome confidently hoped for. The sacramental presence of Jesus in the convent chapel was ever her source of strength and light; and there at the foot of the altar she might be found the first in the morning and the last at night, talking over with the best of all friends, everything that concerned her own welfare and that of her Community. Without the strength that comes from persevering prayer, the bitter experiences of the first few years in Baker City would undoubtedly have led the little band of pioneer Sisters to believe that it was not God's will that they should continue their work. But under the leadership of their prayerful superior, Sister Stanislaus, the courage of the Sisters was sustained, and assurance was given that all that was placed in God's hands would be well.

Sister Marcella, a veritable "spring blossom" in the garden of St. Francis, joyous and light-hearted as the Seraphic Saint himself, was truly the most cherished flower in the Community's first planting in the Far West. She had been clothed with the holy habit of St. Francis when she was but sixteen years of age. As she was found to be particularly skilled in music, she was given the best advantages to develop her talent, and soon acquired remarkable proficiency. Her ability to teach successfully various instruments at length induced Mother Agnes to send her to the distant Western mission to take charge of the music department; and it is in this position that she was most closely identified with St. Francis Academy for over thirty years. Most characteristic of Sister Marcella was her lovely lovableness, her genuine childlike unaffectedness, and her sweet amiable disposition, which made her companionship delightful to all. Wherever Sister Marcella was, there was sunshine; with her, mirthfulness and gayety went hand in hand. The word "death" had an unusually dismal sound for Sister Marcella. No kind of illness could induce her to go to a hospital, as she was sure that somebody had died in every room. When, after her long residence in Baker, her failing health necessitated that her work be lightened, and she was appointed for duty at the orphanage in Spokane, she confidentially remarked to one of the Sisters that she did not mind going, but that children sometimes died there. On being assured that there were not likely to be any deaths for some time to come, she decided that it might be a good place after all; and there for five years she lived among the little orphans as happy and care free as they. Scarcely had the golden day of her espousals come to a close, when God came for the faithful Spouse who had sung so joyously to the world of the sweetness of His service, and placed her in His fair garden of delights, among the "Little Flowers of St. Francis" in Heaven.

Of a far different type in this band of pioneer Sisters was

Sister de Pazzi, serious, and most earnestly solicitous about tomorrow's needs. The special sphere of Sister's labors was the convent kitchen, where she provided most carefully for the bodily sustenance of the Sisters and children. Hers were indeed willing hands; hence, they were often employed in the laundry and other places wherever help was needed. As she was particularly concerned about the health of the Sisters and children, she was regarded as the house physician. Who of those who lived with Sister de Pazzi does not remember the famous hay foot-baths and herb tea that were prescribed for the various ills that flesh is heir to? The efficacy of these homely remedies resulted in no little degree from the kind motherly sympathy and tender charity which accompanied the ministrations; for Sister de Pazzi was gifted with that kindliness that springs from a heart thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of the merciful Christ.

When almost in sight of the long-looked-for golden milestone of her religious life, Sister de Pazzi was forced to cease her labors, only when her feeble body bent with infirmity would no longer respond to the urging of the powerful will which had been her faithful ally in all the years of ceaseless toil. After nearly forty years of devoted service in the little city which had received her among the first mission band of Franciscan Sisters, this good religious soul, who had indeed been solicitous for tomorrow's needs in her spiritual life, laid at last the golden fruits of her long years of toil at the Blessed Master's feet.

Of the pioneer Sisters still "in the ranks" of St. Francis Academy is Sister Polycarp, who in a long service of thirty-five years has contributed most effectively to the progress of the institution. Gifted with extraordinary administrative powers, Sister has been admirably qualified for exercising the duties of the superiorship, which have been combined with those of the schoolroom for twenty years. Her sunny disposition has ever brought cheer to the classroom where her pupils have found her tenderly sympathetic, and possessed of a charity which readily forgives their little failings and is as willing to help plan their amusements as to direct their school work. On the high school register of the academy are the names of many now among the most cultured and refined women of Eastern Oregon who attribute their success in life in no small measure to the influence of their one-time teacher, Sister Polycarp.

Among the pioneer clergy to whom gratitude, heartfelt and enduring, is due for earnest co-operation in the work of the Sisters, is Father Heinrich, who proved to the Community a "friend indeed" in the crucial days when reverses had well nigh exhausted their courage. His prudent counsels and the solicitude manifested in the welfare of every member of the Community, as well as his generous assistance when financial resources were at a low ebb, contributed to assure the Sisters of his devotedness and fatherly protection.

The imposing cathedral, which today proclaims Baker as the Episcopal City of the Diocese of Eastern Oregon, evokes the name of the Right Reverend Bishop O'Reilly, who, from his entrance upon his pastoral duties, gave evidence of his sincere and devoted interest in the work of the Sisters of St. Francis.

The old academy building shorn of its basement and looking forlornly upon its rising competitor, the massive stone structure which was then nearing completion, was His Lordship's first episcopal residence. Here for several months the Sisters shared the riches of their poverty with their good Bishop who, with all the fervor of a true missionary, gladly endured the inconveniences attendant upon the situation. Commensurate with the needs of the poor diocese was the zeal of the Right Reverend Bishop who, in an incredibly short time, secured sufficient means for the erection of a cathedral to supplant the little old frame church whose dingy walls contrasted strangely with the gleam of crozier and mitre. The stately cathedral as we view it today, an architectural gem reposing amidst smiling valleys banked with a wealth of charming mountain scenery, is a magnificent memorial of the exhaustive labors of His Lordship, and that love for the Church and its sacred ceremonies which urged him to rear to God a temple worthy of His Majesty.

Throughout his whole career in the sacred ministry, Bishop O'Reilly was very much interested in Christian education. While a zealous pastor in Portland, his own parish school was very dear to his heart; and after his appointment as bishop he was most earnestly solicitous for the progress of all the schools of the diocese. The little band of children at the academy in Baker City, however, were especially favored in having the good Bishop in their midst.

The visits of His Lordship to the academy were hailed with delight, especially by the younger ones who innocently invited him to share in their games. In the midst of the little ones who clamored around him and clung to him with confident trust in his goodness, the humble Bishop presented a most touching reminder of the kind and indulgent Savior, whose words, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," have added a charm to innocent childhood. There was no reserve between the "good shepherd" and his little "lambs." One day when the recess bell rang at the academy, His Lordship came over to the playground while a lively game of "cat and mouse" was going on, and, upon his appearance, was greeted by a bright little girl with the salutation, "Bishop, won't you be our mouse?" Then followed other youthful voices which could not be unheeded, and new zest was added to the game as the towering form of the good Bishop slipped in and out of the ring to avoid the wary old pussy. Verily did His Lordship interpret literally the words of the Gospel, "Unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven."

The Right Reverend Bishop was most sincerely interested in the welfare of the Sisters. For their spiritual needs he was most provident, gladly officiating at the services in the convent chapel, and occasionally stimulating their zeal by a pious conference. No less solicitous was His Lordship for the Sisters' health; and his frequent exhortation that they exercise in the open air and sunshine, and rest their tired nerves, resulted in many a pleasant walk and a long sleep. The good Bishop was unwearying in his efforts to assist the Sisters so that they might be better able to work for God's glory; and it is to the encouragement and assistance given by His Lordship in the various works in which they were engaged in the diocese that much is due in the upbuilding of their institutions which today are the defense of the Church in Eastern Oregon.

With the elevation of the Right Reverend C. J. O'Reilly to the vacant see of Lincoln in 1918, the episcopal authority in the Diocese of Baker City was delegated to the Right Reverend Joseph F. McGrath, pastor of St. Patrick's Church in Tacoma, Washington. The sight of the spiritually arid fields of Eastern Oregon might have disheartened a soul less great; but Bishop McGrath brought with him a rich spiritual inheritance transmitted by his saintly progenitors in the Isle of Saints; and with admirable endowments of faith and courage, the good pastor entered upon his episcopal duties with a devotedness that inspired the best energies of his co-laborers in the sacred ministry. With true paternal solicitude the Right Reverend Bishop has given every encouragement to the Sisters of St. Francis in their various works in the diocese, and in the short time of his episcopacy has been an inspiration to the Sisters by his own earnest striving for a realization of the higher and better things of the spiritual life.

The spiritual fruitage resulting from the establishment of St. Francis Academy which made the future of Catholicity secure in Baker City, led to the undertaking of another enterprise twelve years later. This was St. Elizabeth's Hospital, which was opened in the primitive academy building. The work was initiated under the superiorship of Sister Philomena, with whom were associated two other capable religious, Sisters Neri and Anacleta. That the hospital gained rapidly in patronage may be learned from the fact that during the year following the opening, one hundred fifteen patients were admitted; while only two years later the number increased to nearly five hundred. Nor were the spiritual results less apparent, as the records show that in one year the Sacrament of Baptism was administered to forty persons, eighteen of whom were adults. In consideration of such results, one must conclude that, while foreign mission work is very highly meritorious, there are many souls in our own midst, hungering for the bread of heavenly doctrine, whose spiritual miseries call most loudly for an interest in home missionary work.

Among those who early sought to enrich themselves through the various valuable resources in the vicinity of Baker City, was a colony of Chinese, whose presence in the city has never been considered very desirable. Chinatown, by which their residence section is designated, has ever been associated with the mysterious; and one hastens past the doors of their little shacks, although in reality there have never been any very grave reasons for apprehension. Among the Chinese who have lived in Baker many years is one familiarly known as Old Tom. He has long earned an honest living by the diligent cultivation of a truck patch which has responded year after year to his care by yielding the choicest garden products. These he has, in fair weather and foul, by means of an old horse and cart, transported to his many customers. Coming one day to the hospital, the aged Chinaman looked more weary and worn than usual. One of the Sisters, noting his feeble step, kindly asked him to come in and take a cup of coffee before resuming his journey. Touched by this display of kindness, he entered, and while enjoying his savory cup of coffee, surveyed the pictures on the wall, among which was a beautiful one of the Madonna and Child. There were signs of appreciation visible upon the old man's face as he stammered out, "Lovely lady, lovely child, but me no like your Church." On subsequent trips to the hospital, Old Tom made inquiries which showed signs of a spiritual awakening.

On being informed of these dispositions, Reverend E. J. Kelly, D. D., who was then chancellor of the diocese and chaplain of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, took a great interest in the old Chinaman, and with a true missionary spirit spent many an hour in explaining to him the truths of religion. Having expressed a desire to do all that was required, Old Tom, already more than eighty years of age, received the regenerating waters of baptism at the hands of good Father Kelly. It was an impressive ceremony in which were revealed on the one hand the simple faith of one who had earnestly sought the way to eternal life, and on the other the zeal of the young priest, who, like the Good Shepherd, had sought out the sheep that are not of the fold.

Among several other Chinese converts was good, old, honest Humpy, likewise over eighty years of age, whose name is suggestive of the stooped form which for years diligently bent over the task of hoeing his cabbages and corn in a little well-tilled field in the vicinity of Baker.

Thus we see that a little act of charity on the part of a kind-hearted Sister of St. Elizabeth's Hospital resulted in initiating home missionary work among the children of the Celestial Empire, a land which has long been the desired goal of those whose pious ambition has coveted the martyr's crown.

The patronage of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, within less than twenty years, increased to such an extent as to make imperative a larger building. A new and spacious stone structure was then planned, and completed in 1915. This together with the academy, cathedral, and Bishop's residence, are evidences that Catholicity in Eastern Oregon has kept in line with modern progress.

The broad fertile valley of the Grande Ronde, which lay in the path of the early Forty-Niners pushing westward in their search for wealth, left impressions of great possibilities for the patient tiller of the soil. When the "golden" dreams of get-rich-quick had vanished, and circumstances led to the seeking of surer means of livelihood, many a weary emigrant turned back to the sunny valley of the Grande Ronde among the Blue Mountains of Oregon where "the skies are so blue and the land so full of flowers." Soon happy farmsteads betokened the prosperity which rewarded the patient toilers, and others, lured on by favorable reports, were soon engaged in the development of the vast resources. Little villages sprang up among the mountains, among which La Grande was the most promising. Among the inhabitants of the valley were staunch Catholics who, at an early date, urged the building of a church. By the year 1894, the large number of Catholic children induced Archbishop Gross to secure Sisters to open a school. An application to Mother Agnes again met with a favorable reply; and under the superiorship of Sister Euphrosina the mission was opened with a registration of forty pupils.

The Catholics of La Grande have always been among the most prosperous and intelligent people of the valley, and the Sisters have found their children particularly docile and lovable; hence, the task of the teacher among them has ever been a pleasant one. The mission, like many others, was begun in poverty, and many privations had to be endured the first few years. But the Sisters have had the hearty co-operation of the kind people of La Grande who have appreciated their service and, by their loyalty, have assisted in maintaining the standard of the school. Particularly worthy of commendation are the music and art departments, which have attracted a large patronage through the excellence of the courses offered and the instruction given.

The old building which was first erected, with a later addition of several rooms, stands now, after nearly forty years, with all appearances of having done long and faithful service. Propped up as it has been to defy the strong winds that sweep down the valley, it has held out heroically against the elements which have laid low some of its most imposing neighbors. With frequent promises of a release from duty, as a consequence of its advancing years, the old academy building looks forward to resigning its sacred charge in the near future to the more secure walls of a modern convent that will be in keeping with the other educational institutions of the Sisters of St. Francis in the West, and in harmony with the scenic beauties of the Grande Ronde Valley.

CHAPTER 2

In the Land of the Golden Grain

". . . valiant Nature bears
Upon earth's broad and never-failing bosom
A yellow shield of bright and gleaming gold."

BEYOND the Blue Mountain region to the west, within the thriving Inland Empire, lies the Umatilla Valley, charmingly beautiful, and wonderful in agricultural resources. The adventurer over the old Oregon Trail fifty years ago, plodding slowly along with his clumsy ox team, beheld in this vicinity only "monotonous plains, gray with sagebrush and brown with sun-burned grass," with only occasionally a smoke-stained tepee on a lonely hill, standing out boldly against the sky. Today, the traveler from his luxuriously cushioned chair in a Pullman car looks out over the same valley upon fields of golden grain, fruitful orchards, and bowlder-dotted hillsides, which offer to numerous herds the wealth of their grassy slopes.

Among the villages along the river which owe their existence to the cultivated fields of the fertile valley, is Pendleton, the center of one of the greatest wheat districts in the world. Nestling securely between two hills that rise abruptly from the river to the north and south, the village is protected from violent storms; while its altitude preserves it from great extremes of heat and cold. We may not safely say, however, that "storms *never* come and that winds *never* blow;" for here, indeed, St. Francis might have found inspiration to add another line to his Canticle in praise of "Brother Wind," whose power at times is awe-inspiring. Looking down the valley to the east, one beholds the white-turbaned Blue Mountains, rising majestically behind fields of grain and forming a colorful panorama with the mingling of blue and gold; while to the west, the glory of the Oregon sunset may be viewed in all its ineffable splendor.

With the name "Pendleton," is inseparably linked today the great "Epic Drama of the West," the "Round-up," in which the sports and pastimes of primitive days in the West are acted out by cowboys, cowgirls, Indians, and simple country-folk, who exhibit great skill in such feats as roping wild steers and riding untamed horses. It is the great event of the year, when the little city arrays herself in her gayest attire of bright-colored blouses and scarfs, and the Indian stalks about among his pale-face neighbors in all his glory of war paint and feathers.

Scarcely two generations ago, on the self-same hills that now overlook the thriving city of Pendleton, the Indian roamed at will; and down the valley echoed the bloody war whoop, as the first white settlers pitched their tents along the inviting banks of the Umatilla. Then came the Blackrobe bringing to the poor children of Nature his message from the Great Spirit whom they had worshiped in their simple way in the storm, the cloud, the lofty pines, and in all the wondrous creation. Meekly these children of the prairie and forest bowed in humble submission to the great God of Revelation; and their savage natures were soon subdued through the efforts of the early missionaries, who lived among them sharing the hard couch which Mother Earth freely offered and their humble fare of dried meat and black moss cake. Among the first of these devoted priests was Father Conrardy, whose jurisdiction encompassed a large territory, embracing not only the whole Indian reservation, but also numerous white settlements in Umatilla County, which was then of vast extent. After ten years of heroic missionary labors, this zealous servant of God devoted the remainder of his life to ameliorating the condition of the lepers in Molokai, and at last in China where his labors among the poor destitute outcasts won for him the title, Apostle of the Lepers. From the year 1875, Holy Mass was said by Father Conrardy in private houses in Pendleton, and finally in the old court house. In the year 1884, a little frame church was built, and, two years later, Father De Roo was transferred from Baker, and became the first resident pastor. In the same year, the Sisters of Mercy opened an academy; but owing to very unfavorable circumstances, the Sisters were obliged to close the institution before the end of the year. The discontinuance of the school was a great disappointment to Archbishop Gross as well as to the good Catholics of Pendleton, as there was a sufficient number of children in the parish to make it very desirable to have a school permanently established there. As the Sisters of Baker City had bravely weathered the storms they had encountered during the first two years of their labors in that city, Archbishop Gross decided to have recourse again to Mother Agnes to take charge of the recently abandoned mission in Pendleton. The strong appeal of the saintly Redemptorist Archbishop could not go unheeded. While on her first visitation to the mission in Baker City, Mother Agnes' far-seeing vision had certainly discerned the great possibilities for the growth of Catholicity in the West, and the consequent prospects of the extension of the Community to promising fields of labor. Again there was great opposition to the proposed mission in the West by conservative members of the Order, who believed it more urgent to answer calls for opening institutions nearer home where success was more certain. But the objections did not outweigh Mother Agnes' strong appeal, and a message was sent to Archbishop Gross that Sisters would open the school in September.

No little excitement again prevailed at the close of retreat at the mother house when it was known that appointments were to be made for the new mission; for at that time, to go West, one needed as much courage as is required to go to China or India today. There were no volunteers called for in those days, as the Sisters were counselled to acquire that simple childlike spirit of obedience which felt secure in doing whatever was suggested by their superiors. But the Sisters were human after all, and if there was an occasional display of nature when some unusual sacrifice was required, it need excite no surprise. For the mission in Pendleton were again needed generous, resolute souls, capable and energetic, but, above all, religious of deep and abiding trust that God would assist their efforts. After due consideration, it was decided that Sister Stanislaus should take charge of opening the new mission, as she had become familiar with the West and understood the conditions in Pendleton which had caused the withdrawal of the Sisters of Mercy. The success of the mission in Baker City, in spite of the disheartening conditions that had rendered it almost impossible to continue, had assured Sister Stanislaus of God's provident care; and her fearlessness in attempting what seemed to others only rashness was an outcome, not of trust in her own capabilities, but of her simple faith that God would bless what was undertaken through obedience. Just when the mission in Baker City was fairly well established and there was an outlook of prosperously continuing, good Sister Stanislaus, whose life for two years had been a struggle to maintain the dignity of her position and that of the Community under her charge, received the summons to go elsewhere. Only a few words of a telegram put an end to the dream of remaining at St. Francis Academy and of enjoying the fruits of her labors. But obedience called; and, with the promptness of St. Joseph who hearkened to the voice of an angel to set out for an unknown country, Sister Stanislaus, in company with Sister Ferdinand, left her happy home in Baker City to go again among strangers.

When she arrived in Pendleton, Sister Stanislaus found the situation much as she had expected. The convent which had been occupied by the Sisters of Mercy was to be their future home. It looked indeed lonely and forlorn standing out on the bare hillside; for in the few months of its existence there had been no time for planting trees and for beautifying the surroundings, as the Sisters had been concerned only with the stern reality of securing the bare necessaries of life. Forty years ago there was no thought of paved streets in Pendleton, and the wind which occasionally swept down the valley at a lively rate, carried the dust in great clouds, driving it through every crevice and depositing it upon every available surface. The convent had not been spared its share of dust; and, during the several months of its vacancy, there had accumulated no inconsiderable amount on the floors and few household articles that had not been disposed of. As Sister Stanislaus and her companion viewed the situation and realized what was to be done in a few weeks, it required no little courage, one may well believe, to set themselves to the task of cleaning the house and of securing the necessary articles wherewith to furnish it for a boarding school. Here again, as in Baker City, Sister Stanislaus' energy and resourcefulness were put to the test. With confidence in God and the intercession of her good friend, St. Joseph, she solicited aid from the good people of the city. Of these firm friends of the Sisters in the crucial days of their first beginnings, Mr. John Gagen has the greatest claim to the gratitude of the Community for his kindly service. At that time, Mr. Gagen was proprietor of the Golden Rule Hotel, and was one of the most influential and highly

ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY
PENDLETON, OREGON

respected citizens of the city. Besides, he was an exemplary Catholic, and had enthusiastically advocated that Archbishop Gross secure the services of the Sisters for continuing the work at the academy. He was among the first to greet the Sisters on their arrival; and there was a warmth in his hearty words of welcome and an expression of benignity in his kind blue eyes and beaming countenance that assured the Sisters they had found a real friend. And such he ever proved to be by his wise counsels in their financial difficulties and his generous assistance in time of need.

On the fourth of September, Sisters Kilian, Euphrosina, Charity, and Malachy, who had been assigned to duty in Pendleton, arrived from the East, travel-worn indeed, but enthusiastic over the wonders that the trip across the great continent had revealed, and eager to be numbered among the Western missionaries. How little that valiant band, youthful and buoyant of spirit, divined the great work God had in store for them! What a joy for them it would have been to know that the scantily furnished, unpretentious looking convent which they entered was destined to be one day the center of the province and the nursery of the Order in the Far West.

Within ten days after the arrival of the Sisters, sufficient preparations had been made for the re-opening of the school. That first Monday morning was an anxious one; for the closing of the institution the previous year had caused even the best disposed Catholics to doubt the success of the school under the new management. Before the close of the first day, however, seventeen were enrolled, four of whom were resident pupils. The first boarder for whom application was made, was the only daughter of Mr. Gagen. She had previously attended the academy at The Dalles. This estimable young lady was also a member of the first graduating class, and later entered the Community. Sister Praxedes, as she is now known, with all the amiability and lovely characteristics of her father, has been a veritable sunbeam in the Community; and her deeply religious nature has had an ennobling and refining influence upon the pupils with whom she comes in contact in her daily task of teaching music.

During the first few years in Pendleton, the Sisters were forced to endure many privations. Whatever money was collected from the pupils was used to improve the boarders' apartments.

The Sisters were, therefore, obliged to live in extreme poverty. But hard benches and hard couches did not disturb their peace of mind and joy of heart, nor did it lessen the enthusiasm of these young Franciscan missionaries. Day after day, Sister Stanislaus trudged along the dusty roads from one ranch to another, acquainting the good country people with the advantages of placing their children in the boarding school, and soliciting humbly for money and provisions.

The academy had been rededicated to St. Joseph; and under the patronage of this good and provident Father, wonders were accomplished. Before the close of the year, the enrollment had increased to fifty-six and the number of resident pupils to seventeen; while the spiritual fruitage was apparent in the baptism of four girls.

Archbishop Gross was, in the meantime, not unmindful of his spiritual daughters in Pendleton, and was delighted when he learned that their mission had every appearance of being firmly established. In order the better to provide for their spiritual well-being, he appointed a chaplain for the academy, the Reverend Father Thibeau, a saintly priest, who proved to be a most estimable friend, father, and protector of the Sisters. His arrival on the Feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph gave another convincing proof of the watchful care of the great patriarch of the Church, who, indeed, never forsakes those who place themselves under his protection. During the four years of his chaplaincy, Father Thibeau rendered valuable assistance by teaching a class of small boys, taking care of the lawn and flowers, and performing many other tasks which lightened the labors of the Sisters.

Sister Stanislaus had considered it among her first duties to provide, as well as their limited means would permit, for the adornment of the convent chapel. A kind benefactor had, during the first year, donated a statue of St. Joseph which was placed on one side of the altar. On the opposite side stood a pedestal destined for a statue of Our Blessed Lady. As there were many demands on their slender purse, the Sisters could not think of buying anything during the first year except what was really necessary. But as time passed, the bare pedestal began to look woefully out of keeping with the surroundings. The second year, then, it was suggested that the Sisters pray for three more good paying boarders. If they came, a statue was to be secured for the vacant pedestal. After praying for a month, without having any more applications for the boarding school, it appeared that the Blessed Mother was not very much concerned about having a statue. But the Sisters were concerned about it, and induced Sister Stanislaus to send for one and trust to Providence for money to pay the bill. An order was then sent to New York after Christmas. As the freight was at that time uncertain, the statue could not be reasonably expected for about six weeks. Contrary to all expectations, however, on the twenty-third of January, the Feast of the Espousals, and that year on Saturday, the statue arrived and was placed in the chapel opposite St. Joseph. There was great rejoicing over the timely arrival of the statue. But where was the money to come from to pay for it? That question was decided before the day was over, for on that very afternoon, three boarders arrived. The Sisters were thereby assured that God was pleased with their desire to honor His Blessed Mother.

About five years afterwards, Archbishop Gross presented the academy with a beautiful statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, which was placed in a grotto built for the purpose in a prominent place on the grounds. Here the Sisters and children were accustomed to assemble in the evening and sing the Litany and hymns in honor of Our Blessed Lady. Several times when His Grace was in Pendleton, he, too, joined in singing the praises of the Heavenly Queen. Then, like a beloved father, he would gather the little ones around him and tell them of his visits to Lourdes and other shrines of Europe. A few months later, the Most Reverend Archbishop announced to Sister Stanislaus his intention of crowning the statue, the circumstances of which may be learned from the following letter:

"MY DEAR SISTER:

I have been wishing for some time to obtain a favor from Our Lady. Of course the more naughty a boy is, the more he will endeavor to entice the kind, indulgent mother to ask for what he wants. Now I have promised the Blessed Virgin, that if she obtains my request I will present a handsome crown to your statue of Our Lady of Lourdes."

The request was granted; and the promise was more than fulfilled by blessing the crown and then having it carried in procession to the grotto where the coronation took place. After the new chapel was built, the statue was placed over the high altar where it remains today, evoking sweet memories of the Blessed Mother and her faithful client, the saintly Archbishop Gross.

For the first few years, the Sisters in Pendleton had many reverses of fortune. During those times of financial depression throughout the country, when scarcely any money could be collected, they prayed a rosary with extended arms for every ten dollars that was received. Sister Stanislaus ever maintained, even amidst the most trying circumstances, an unwavering confidence in the intercession of St. Joseph; and God rewarded her simple trust by sending assistance, at times, in a very striking manner. At one time a bill was received for a considerable sum when there was not a cent in the bank to her credit, nor any visible means of getting money from any source. The Sisters were urged to pray that in some way the money might be secured. The prayer of faith was soon answered; for, before the day was ended, application was made for a little girl to enter the boarding school. The father of the child had decided to go to California, and as he was not to return for some time, he made out a check in payment for two terms in advance. This was the exact sum they were praying for. The good news was hastily communicated to the Sisters by Sister Stanislaus, who waved the check in at the open door of the chapel where they were assembled. Their earnest prayer of petition was then changed into one of fervent thanksgiving.

Another remarkable instance of God's provident care of His household at St. Joseph's, and of the reward of prompt obedience as well, is recorded in the early history of the Community which tells of the narrow escape of two Sisters from an untimely death. One evening, the bell which summoned the Sisters to supper had scarcely sounded when all were startled by the sound of wild shrieks from an intoxicated Indian. He was on horseback and was urging his poor steed madly on by frequent applications of spurs. As he was passing the academy, he brandished a pistol and fired through the window of the community room, a shot which lodged just opposite where Sister Stanislaus and Sister Kilian had been sitting only a few minutes before. Had they not answered the first sound of the bell, undoubtedly one of them at least might have been the victim of a tragic death, and the work of the little struggling Community in the West would have been greatly impeded.

Within ten years, God had so blessed the work of the Sisters that their means permitted the erection of a much needed addition to the old building, which included the beautiful chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes. Again, in 1918, when the number of boarders had increased to considerably over one hundred, and there were applications which could not be considered for lack of room, a three-story fire-proof structure with all modern improvements was erected at a cost of $110,000. St. Joseph's Hall, for the accommodation of boys from six to twelve years of age, was also erected on the grounds. The completion of this building has been most heartily appreciated by the people of Eastern Oregon, as it has enabled them to send their boys as well as their girls to be educated under Catholic influences.

The campus of the academy is spacious and beautifully laid out, and presents the appearance of a well kept park, with stately shade trees, shrubs, and flowers of many varieties; while the playground is furnished with adequate facilities for those outdoor amusements which insure the proper physical development of the children.

The work done by the Sisters in the Western academies cannot be overestimated. The children of the various parishes are given advantages for a thorough education, which combines moral and religious training with the intellectual; while, in the boarding school the pupils are under the constant supervision of the Sisters and have special opportunities for acquiring those virtues that will best fit them for home life and for edifying society. The pupils, after several years of residence at the academy, often return to their homes and become real missionaries by assembling the Catholic children for Sunday School, and preparing them for the reception of the sacraments. By their exemplary lives, they also lead others into the true Fold.

The ignorance of religious practices among those who live remote from Catholic influence is sometimes surprising. Children from these homes are often not familiar with the simplest truths of religion, nor are they able to say a single prayer. On coming to the academy, their first visit to the chapel is a revelation. What does it all mean—the statues, the ceremonies of the Mass, and the various devotions? One instance is related of a little girl about nine years of age who lived in the country, and whose knowledge was limited to cows and chickens and the little world around her on her father's ranch. On being brought by her good parents to live with the Sisters at St. Joseph's Academy, she exclaimed on beholding in the chapel the beautiful statue of Our Lady of Lourdes over the high altar, "Ma, what's that woman roostin' up there for?" This little girl remained at the academy until her graduation, and is today a successful teacher in the public schools and a "pillar of the Church" in the little village where she resides.

A great work in which the Sisters of the academies have been engaged the past few years is that of the summer catechism classes. These are provided for children whose parents are too poor to send them to a boarding school. Their homes are for the most part little shacks built in mountain mining districts or on arid lands where there is offered scant sustenance for bands of sheep and cattle.

After the strenuous work of the scholastic year is finished and the boarders have departed for their homes, this second class of little ones is ready to occupy the places vacated and to be instructed for their first Holy Communion and Confirmation. The task is a laborious one, but the Sisters feel more than compensated when the glorious results are considered; for many a child would otherwise never hear the name of God except in profanation. So extreme is the poverty in which some of these little ones are reared, that clothing must be provided before they can leave home. For many of them, the two weeks spent at the academy is like being transported to another world. To sleep in a bed and to have three meals a day are luxuries they have never known. It is the one oasis they have reached in their desolate journey of life to which they may often return in memory with brightest thoughts. "Only God Himself knows how much good has been done for these country children," says Right Reverend Bishop McGrath; "the great influence of the Sisters on these children will react on their parents. The good seed sown in their minds and hearts has already taken root, and I have fullest confidence that in His own good time, the Lord of the harvest will bless and fructify what the Sisters have planted." The Sisters at St. Joseph's Academy have entered most heartily into this missionary work, and have thrown open the doors of their spacious building to all who apply. Here outdoor classes are held in shady nooks of the beautiful campus, where the children are able to study in pleasant surroundings; and thus the study of catechism will always be associated with happy memories.

For thirteen years, Sister Stanislaus directed the work at St. Joseph's Academy most successfully, when she was called upon to assume the provincialship of the missions which were included in what is known as the Western Province. For this duty no one was better prepared, nor was any one more deserving of the honor; for Sister Stanislaus' service had been one of unremitting labor and of sacrifice nobly borne. In order that she might the better attend to the affairs of the province, she was relieved of the superiorship of St. Joseph's Academy, which was delegated to Sister Kilian, who had been most closely associated with her from the inception of the work in Pendleton.

As the patronage of western academies depended largely upon the facilities offered for the study of music, it was necessary in selecting the personnel of the Community destined for the mission in Pendleton, to appoint one who could teach music successfully. As Sister Kilian had shown particular aptitude for the work, and had other qualifications which recommended her as a valuable member of the missionary band, her appointment was readily sanctioned by members of the Council. And in this choice, we again recognize that Mother Agnes was particularly inspired, as she had been in the appointment of Sister Stanislaus. Sister Kilian's proficiency in music and her skill in imparting knowledge won the confidence of the pupils, and gained for the music department a wide patronage. An increased income was realized thereby, which rendered it possible for the Sisters to make many improvements in their surroundings.

Sister Kilian's beneficent influence was best exercised among the girls of the boarding school, of whom she was given charge outside of school hours. Her habitually kind and amiable disposition won the confidence of the girls, and led them to approach her with the greatest assurance of being kindly received; while she very tactfully found means of banishing the heartaches of the homesick pupil. Children in those days were confided to the care of the Sisters for a whole school year, with perhaps a few days' vacation at Christmas. There were no week-end home-goings, as means of transportation were often not available. As attractions of the city were not so numerous, the children seldom left the academy. For this reason, the training they received from the Sisters was very salutary, as there were few influences to counteract the good that was accomplished.

The only contact which Sister Kilian had with the outside world was in her position as portress, for which she was admirably qualified by her charity and prudence and by her refinement of manner, all of which were evident in her courteous greeting to strangers and cordial welcome to friends and patrons of the academy. Her kind and benevolent countenance inspired parents with the greatest confidence in placing their children in her motherly care; and her kind-heartedness, which knew so well how to extend a little timely word of sympathy and encouragement, gave them assurance of her interest in their welfare.

Sixteen years of experience in the pioneer mission in the West had enhanced Sister Kilian's natural and spiritual qualities, and had developed capabilities for leadership, which prepared her admirably for directing the work at St. Joseph's Academy. It is not an enviable lot at times for one to be raised to the superiorship in the house where she has for years lived as a humble inferior. But when Sister Kilian's appointment was made known, there was no dissenting voice; for with all her endearing qualities there were always in evidence a noble dignity and reserve which elicited respect and reverence from her companions in religion. Her prudent foresight and resourcefulness insured the successful administration of business affairs; while her gentle, peace-loving nature in which firmness was tempered by mildness, tended to ennoble the spirit of community life.

When Frances Willard was asked what was the true mission of the ideal woman, she replied: "It is to make the whole world homelike." And Mrs. Lindsay writes that if woman does not make her surroundings homelike, and if she herself is not loving and

REVEREND MOTHER MARY KILIAN, O. S. F.

cheery, gentle in manner and beautiful in soul, the world will feel that one thing is lacking,—vivid, tender womanliness, for which no knowledge can compensate. "It is better," adds the same author, "for woman to fill a simple human part lovingly, better for her to be sympathetic in trouble and to whisper a comforting message into but one grieving ear, than that she should make a path to Egypt and lecture to thousands on ancient Thebes."

As an ideal superior, Sister Kilian fulfilled her mission by creating around her an atmosphere of home, where there was no restraint in her relation with her Sisters. "There is a beautiful picture in Grecian story," says Charles Summer, "that there was at least one spot—the small island of Delos—dedicated to the gods, and kept at all times sacred from war, where the citizens of hostile countries met and united in common worship." In the convent, this sacred place is the community room, where the conflicts of the day in the sick room and in the classroom may for a time be forgotten, and all meet in friendly intercourse that the soul may be strengthened for the future. The community room at St. Joseph's was Sister Kilian's sacred precinct. Like a good mother, she was always at home. Here the Sisters always found her ready to give a word of counsel and encouragement.

Six years of experience in the superiorship had enhanced the extraordinary capabilities of Sister Kilian, so that when the canonical term of Mother Stanislaus expired, there was no hesitation on the part of major superiors in appointing her to the provincialship of the Western Province. There was great rejoicing among the Sisters and universal satisfaction expressed at the decision, as all realized that they were under capable leadership.

It would be difficult to estimate the influence that Mother Kilian exerted through the co-operation and encouragement given in the various works of the province. Her quiet, unassuming manner and her accessibility gained the devotion and confidence of those in the humblest work of the Community; while her pure Franciscan ideals, supported by her own careful observance of the rules and constitutions of the Order, and her amiable piety inspired her Sisters with a generosity in the service of Christ who wished all to feel the truth of His words: "My yoke is sweet and My burden light."

After thirty-three years of missionary life in the Far West, Mother Kilian, who was admirably qualified for exercising higher authority, was chosen to fill the office of superior general. While the Sisters of the Western Province rejoiced at the great honor which was conferred on their good Mother, all realized that it meant a sacrifice in being deprived of her cheering presence which had given light and courage in many a trial. It was above all, in her old convent home at St. Joseph's that her departure to other scenes of labor was most sincerely regretted; for it was her efficient services that had contributed largely to the upbuilding of the institution which had become the center of the Community's activity in the West.

While the Community was especially blessed in having able superiors to direct the work in the West in initiative years, it has had no less reason to feel the hand of Divine Providence guiding its later destinies through their worthy successors. Among these whose timely appearance was recognized as an answer to long and persevering prayer for laborers to assist in the work of the harvest, was Mother Solano, who was sent by Reverend Mother Agnes to Pendleton five years after the founding of the mission. Mother Solano's rare mental attainments and particular aptitude for imparting knowledge early determined her career as a teacher, and as such, for ten years she successfully conducted the work of the high school department at the academy. The character of the work she accomplished may best be determined from the exemplary lives of the many pupils moulded into noble womanhood under her efficient guidance, who now occupy positions of trust in the busy world of toilers, or preside over the domestic hearth as devoted wives and mothers.

The solidity and dignity of her character were determining factors which recommended her appointment as mistress of novices shortly after the establishment of the novitiate in the Western Province in 1903, and it is in this capacity that Mother Solano's influence has been most serviceable to the Community.

That the work of transformation which the mistress of novices must effect in her subjects is both a difficult task and one of grave responsibility, is readily conceded by those who are familiar with the duties of religious life. With a variety of temperaments and inclinations with which to deal and different capacities for discerning spiritual things, the mistress of novices must be patient and painstaking, as well as vigilant in her efforts to inculcate the religious spirit of the Institute, which is to determine the peace and joy of individuals as well as the perpetuation of the Congregation itself.

For nearly thirty years Mother Solano's natural qualities of prudence, firmness, and sound judgment have made her a force of divine efficacy in training the young soldiers of Christ for the battle of life, not to serve as "sunshine patriots," but as determined combatants, striving for the laurels of Franciscan sanctity, to whom the future destinies of the Community in the West may be safely confided.

While the flame of Franciscan charity and zeal was first kindled on the hearthstone of St. Joseph's by Mother Stanislaus and her worthy successor, Mother Kilian, it has in later years been kept aglow through the untiring efforts of Mother Solano to whom the superiorate was delegated in 1909, and later the provincialship at the expiration of Mother Kilian's term of office. For nine years she labored faithfully to promote the progress of the institutions of the province, besides continuing her duties as mistress of novices. Her best energies, however, were directed to securing the highest efficiency in the work of the schools, for which her superiority as teacher and her years of experience in solving the various problems of classroom management had admirably prepared her. In considering Mother Solano's timely entrance into the West and her valuable services for nearly forty years as teacher, novice mistress, and again as both local and provincial superior, we shall recognize how the Divine will has unfolded itself in the course of events and has directed everything to its own predetermined ends making "all things work together unto good."

The provincialship, in 1924, was delegated to Mother Bernadette, whose faithful and energetic service rendered the Community in the West for thirty-five years, twenty of which were in the superiorate of various difficult missions, admirably prepared her for directing the work of the province. Her adaptability has been of great service to the Community, as it has enabled major superiors to entrust to her the direction of both school and hospital missions, in each of which her efficiency in management has been highly commendable.

St. Joseph's Academy today bears little resemblance to the humble, unadorned convent which Mother Stanislaus beheld as it stood out on the bare, lonely hillside, waiting for a hopeful sign from its prospective tenants for continued usefulness. In the passing years the addition of more commodious buildings and the beautifying of the surroundings bespeak the blessings of God upon the humble beginnings made by the devoted pioneers. St. Joseph's Academy to which are attached the provincial house and the novitiate of the province, has double claim on the Sisters of the Far West for veneration. Here they find a delightful, cloistral seclusion to which they may come, when ordinary tasks are laid aside, to refresh themselves by a spiritual retreat, or to add to their intellectual store by the acquisition of knowledge, which the provident care of superiors makes possible through instructions given by capable teachers. St. Joseph's is especially dear to many of the Sisters of the West on account of being closely associated with the novitiate, their spiritual Alma Mater, where they were schooled in the science of the saints.

When the last payment was made on the debt which had been contracted in building the new addition to St. Joseph's Academy, Mother Stanislaus joyfully remarked to the Sisters that now she was free to begin the erection of a hospital. There was considerable surprise manifested at this announcement, as the last cent on their bank deposit had been drawn to meet the payment, and the little that could be saved from their meager earnings would be very inconsiderable towards the erection of a hospital. The prospects of another heavy debt had rather a depressing effect upon the Community, each one of whom felt a responsibility in securing its payment. The least troubled was Mother Stanislaus, who replied to objections with her characteristic phrase, "God will provide." To undertake to build a hospital without knowing where the first cent was to be obtained for beginning the work would ordinarily be pronounced as rash as putting to sea without a compass or any means of guidance; but with such a character as Mother Stanislaus, the venture was simply the outcome of a deep, abiding confidence in God and a literal interpretation of the words, "Cast all your care upon the Lord, for He hath care of you."

Without hesitation, Mother commenced the soliciting of loans and donations from friends and benefactors of the Community; and soon sufficient was obtained to insure the erection of the hospital. It was completed in 1902, at a cost of $65,000. On the Feast of St. Anthony of the same year, it was blessed and dedicated to the great Saint of Padua by the Right Reverend C. J. O'Reilly, D. D.

The superiorship of the hospital was entrusted to Sister Bernadette, who, with her devoted associates, strove most diligently to give the best care and attention to all who applied for admission. Although excellent facilities for carrying on the work successfully had been provided, the patronage at first was quite insufficient to insure an income that in any considerable way lessened the debt; hence, the financial question was a very serious one at times. Good Mother Stanislaus had indeed been successful in borrowing money to erect the building; but the burden of responsibility of paying back the sum together with the interest fell upon Sister Bernadette. Appeals to the Wonder Worker of Padua, however, were not in vain; for with God's blessing, and the skillful management of the meager income, the work was continued, and prospered to such an extent that, within twenty years, the building proved to be too small to accommodate the increasing number of patients. In keeping with the progressive spirit of the Community, a magnificent four-story structure of reinforced concrete was then erected adjoining the former building at a cost of $300,000. This, with its modern equipment and furnishing, exemplifies all that is up-to-date in hospital arrangement, and is declared to be one of the finest in the Northwest. The blessing and dedication ceremonies of the new St. Anthony Hospital, which took place October 22, 1922, were conducted by Right Reverend J. F. McGrath, D. D., who in a few well chosen words extolled the services of the Sisters of St. Francis in Eastern Oregon, and placed before the minds of his hearers the encouragement given by the Church to hospital work from Apostolic times. "It was not till the coming of Christ that the work was begun," said His Lordship. "He changed the world by the simple words, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' "

Ere the building was completed, the great wave of religious bigotry which sought to destroy all Catholic institutions swept over the country and was particularly destructive in Eastern Oregon. A great blow to the work was planned by most intriguing enemies; but in spite of their efforts, the hospital gained in patronage, while the attacks aimed against it only served to hasten the downfall of those who were bent on its destruction. Mr. Harry Warner, the city attorney, who addressed the friends of the institution assembled on the day of dedication, alluding to the defamatory attacks of bigots said most aptly: "Such criticism may be likened to a person who casts a stone into a quiet lake. A momentary ripple on the surface is produced at first. He is pleased for a time at the disturbance he has created; but soon this ripple disappears and the lake is left smooth and undisturbed to refresh the traveler."

Another prominent mission which the Sisters of St. Francis were urged to accept within the great Inland Empire of the Northwest was in Eastern Washington, at Tekoa, the location of which in a rich, agricultural region determined its desirability as a railroad center. The Catholic population of Tekoa itself was very inconsiderable, and would not have warranted the establishment of a school; but its accessibility from the surrounding villages gave promise of securing a large number of resident pupils. With this consideration, Mother Agnes accepted the mission on the Feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady, and informed Mother Stanislaus that Sister Immaculate was appointed superior, with Sisters Demetria, Matthew, Illuminata, and Ethelreda as her associates.

The little village of Tekoa, nestling securely on the lower slopes and at the base of Mount Tekoa, commands a beautiful view of the surrounding country, with its fields of golden grain in the late summer forming a pleasing contrast to the ripening fruits of the intervening orchards. The ground upon which the Sisters' convent and school were to be erected, was in the higher part of the town, quite remote from the principal residence section and the business center, and was an ideal spot for a boarding school. Mr. John McDonald had kindly donated two and three-fourths acres, which to Sister Immaculate's discerning eye, would in time under the skillful hand of a diligent gardener, provide all the fruit and vegetables needed, and thereby lessen expenses considerably.

In order to hasten proceedings for the opening of school, Sister

Immaculate and one Sister went to Tekoa in June, 1892, and took up their residence in a little four-roomed house near the site of the proposed academy. The Catholics of Tekoa were very considerate of their needs and generously supplied them with provisions for their daily and future use; and no little merriment was produced in storing away potatoes, apples, and other vegetables and fruits under the beds and in every available corner. One room of their little house was reserved for a chapel; and, as there was no church in Tekoa at that time, the Catholics of the village attended Mass there. With the addition of several families from the country, there was quite a congregation which well filled the chapel. Father Mackin, the Jesuit priest who had charge of the mission, said Mass only occasionally in Tekoa on Sundays. This necessitated that the Sisters attend Mass at the DeSmet Mission on the Lapwai Reservation, ten miles distant; and as the Sisters had no conveyance of their own, they had to depend upon the charity of their neighbors when they wished to attend. Those were not the days of rapid transit. The only available means of riding was in a large farm wagon over roads which, at times, were almost impassable. As they had to travel over the reservation, there was always danger of attacks from the Indians, who were not on very friendly terms with their white neighbors at that time. One Sunday, there was quite an encounter with a drunken Indian on horseback who made desperate attempts to stab the Sisters. The poor horse which he was riding was streaming with blood as a result of being stabbed by his merciless rider, and leaped forward each time the knife was thrust into his quivering body. The infuriated Indian spurred on the poor beast until it was opposite the Sisters' wagon and then slashed right and left with his big knife. Fortunately the blows were dodged. In the midst of the excitement, another Indian came dashing along on horseback, and stopped to see what was the matter. Noting the condition of affairs, he succeeded in getting the Indian off his horse and relieved him of his dangerous weapon. Then all hastened away as fast as possible, leaving the drunken Indian staggering along the roadside.

When the Sisters reached the church that eventful morning, they assisted at Mass with great devotion, and fervently thanked God that they had been preserved from a tragic death. Had it not been for the timely arrival of the sober Indian, there might indeed have been a sad page in the records of Mount St. Joseph's Academy.

The building of the Sisters' convent and academy was begun in July, and sufficient had been completed by October twenty-third to enable the Sisters to open school. Ten boarders and twenty-five day pupils were registered the first day; and by the close of the term there were thirty-four boarders and many more day pupils. The generous patronage of the institution gave the Sisters great courage; but the next year, the famous one of 1893, on account of bank failures and the shortage in the wheat crop, very few were in attendance. Only two resident pupils were registered the first day, and for the whole year only nine were enrolled. Payments were due and interest besides; and, as outstanding debts could not be collected, the Sisters were forced to borrow money, and thereby had to pay compound interest. As there was not much of an income from the school, the Sisters in Tekoa experienced their full measure of tribulation in trying to make ends meet. The debt on the building was a torturing anxiety; and without other resources than those on hand, it was impossible to meet the payments. Sister Immaculate was happily adaptable and resourceful, and decided to rent a farm and raise sugar beets to increase the income. A good workman was found and under Sister Immaculate's supervision the work progressed. In order to lessen expenses, the Sisters assisted in the work as much as possible after school hours. When the beets were brought from the fields, they were taken to the academy and stored in a shed. Then as soon as school was dismissed the Sisters prepared them for market by topping them. This for a short time was considered only a pleasant diversion; but when continued day after day and long into the hours of the night, and the poor tender hands were bruised and bleeding, it necessarily became a torture. All endured the labor and vexation connected with the beet industry, however, in anticipation of realizing a considerable sum that would help to pay the debts; but in this they were disappointed. When expenses were considered, there was not even enough to pay the laborers. Money then had to be borrowed for this purpose; and the Sisters' labor was all in vain.

The next venture was in raising vegetables of various kinds,

MT. ST. JOSEPH'S ACADEMY
TEKOA, WASHINGTON

ST. JOSEPH'S ORPHANAGE
SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

for which there was a ready market. In this work they were quite successful, as considerable was added to the income, although the Sisters themselves did nearly all of the work in order to save expenses.

Days of prosperity succeeded those of adversity, until the large number of those who applied for admission to the academy resulted in the erection of a much larger building with all modern improvements. At one time the school was the most flourishing of those which the Sisters conducted in the West; but with the establishment of other boarding schools in the near-by villages, the patronage of Mount St. Joseph's was in time considerably lessened.

When the Milwaukee Railroad announced its intention of extending a line into Tekoa, the people of the little village felt highly elated at the compliment. But when the Sisters of Mount St. Joseph's Academy learned that, by right of eminent domain, a choice portion of their goodly acres was to be appropriated by the railroad company, there were lamentations indeed that their peace was to be disturbed several times a day by the shrieking of a near-by locomotive announcing the arrival of its cargo. There was nothing to do, however, but yield to the inevitable, and resign themselves to a disagreeable situation to which with the passing years they have become quite accustomed.

Encouraged by the success of the work in the West, and impelled by boundless zeal to extend still further the usefulness of the Community, Mother Agnes considered favorably the request of Reverend Father Mackin, S. J., to undertake the care of destitute children in Spokane. Sister Barbara was appointed superior of the new mission and with her were associated Sisters Neri and Onuphria. The Sisters left Philadelphia for the West August 22, 1890, and two weeks later they were joined by Sisters Oswalda and Rhabana. As the building destined for the use of the Sisters was not completed, they received gracious hospitality at the home of Mr. James Monaghan. When the home was opened, six children were given into their care; but by the end of the year the number increased to forty. As there was no definite income to depend on the first year, the Sisters were obliged to collect alms to support the institution, and very often they were on the verge of dire want. The following year, the county and city each gave $100 per month.

The children were then better provided for. In the course of time, the number of applicants for admission to the home became so numerous that in order to accommodate them it was necessary to make an addition to the old frame building. This was done largely through private donations and collections made by the Sisters. Within six years there were ninety little ones being cared for; and as crowded conditions were very unfavorable to the health and comfort of the children, Sister Eugenia, the enterprising superior who had been placed in charge of the institution, acquainted Mother Agnes with the situation, and urged the erection of a new building. As usual, the financial question was the main issue; but being assured by the good superior that the generous public-spirited citizens of Spokane would give ready assistance, Mother Agnes consented to the undertaking. The history of the new St. Joseph's Orphanage is one which records the confidence of those who put their trust in God's goodness and providence. To support ninety children, and, at the same time, to plan the erection of a building with no knowledge of where the first cent was to come from, there was need not only of courage, but also of the greatest trust in God. The orphanage had been happily dedicated to St. Joseph, and under his powerful protection Sister Eugenia began the task of collecting. The first great-hearted friend of the orphans who offered his assistance was Mr. Charles Sweeney, who advanced $5,000, and added the same amount a few months later. Mr. Patrick Clark, not to be outdone in generosity, contributed a like sum. Encouraged by these liberal donations, others hastened to increase the sum, until there was sufficient to insure the erection of a very substantial building.

Of all the friends of the orphans Mr. Sweeney was the most interested, as he not only contributed most generously, but like a good father relieved the Sisters of much labor in superintending the work of the building and in making collections. The building was begun in the spring of 1899, and by January, 1901, was ready for occupancy. The orphanage was then dedicated to St. Joseph by Bishop O'Dea on the Feast of the Annunciation of the same year. At the close of the eventful day, Mr. Sweeney, who had come from New York for the occasion, inquired of Sister Eugenia the amount of indebtedness still on the building; and on being informed that still there remained $28,000 to be paid, this good friend of the orphans wrote out a check for the entire amount. Many had been the prayers directed to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by His "little pensioners," and in such a display of generosity, we find an answer to those little pleadings which God in His goodness could not leave unheeded. For the maintenance of the children another benefactor, who wished his name withheld, gave $25,000. Other benefactions of lesser value have likewise been added. Another special instance of God's provident care of His little ones is recorded. This was in later years, when a floor for the sanctuary and other improvements for the chapel were needed. There was no money on hand which would not be needed for the support of the children; nevertheless, the improvements were made and the little children were asked to pray that in some way the money would be secured to pay the debt. When the work was nearing completion, a letter containing a check was received which covered the whole amount of indebtedness.

Even a brief record of St. Joseph's Orphanage would be incomplete without a special mention of Sister Oswalda, who alone of the pioneer Sisters has continued uninterruptedly her labors for the orphans, and has witnessed the growth of the institution from the little frame building to the present imposing brick structure. Untiringly this good Sister has traversed the highways and byways for forty years soliciting aid from day to day for the maintenance of the little dependents. Her sweet and amiable disposition and her whole-hearted devotion to her arduous task have won for her universal esteem and veneration. Sister Oswalda's beaming countenance and cheerful greeting on her daily round of duty make life a little brighter for those with whom she comes in contact; and her appeals for aid are irresistible. Among the orphans she is singularly loved. In her motherly solicitude for their welfare, she never forgets their little needs. Her greatest delight is to make them happy. Bright and cheerful herself, Sister endeavors to make everybody else happy, too; and in this whole-souled giving of herself to others, "her overflowing kindness and sunny humor are communicated to all around her."

ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL
Tacoma, Washington

ST. ANTHONY'S HOSPITAL
Pendleton, Oregon

CHAPTER 3

On Far Pacific Shores

"Where the mighty Columbia rolls down to the sea
And the pines gently echo the breeze."

BEYOND the Inland Empire "in the shadows a-west of the sunset mountains," is another land, fertile and fair to behold, "a winterless earth's end . . . perpetually wooed by the enchanting smile of ocean" on the one side, and on the other guarded by the majestic Sierras with their silvery peaks piercing the cloudland. Here Nature spreads before our view a pleasing variety—vast stretches of billowy evergreen forests through which dreamily glide murmuring brooks and swift-flowing streams; broad expanses of fertile fields moistened by refreshing showers which are never withheld; towering cliffs that charm the eye with their wealth of coloring.

One of the most favored portions of this charming region is that in the Evergreen State around Puget Sound. Here scarcely more than fifty years ago, in a clearing in the great wilderness of giant trees, a few rude shacks were constructed around a sawmill. These were the beginnings of the present city of Tacoma. With a realization of great commercial possibilities, and the prospects of the development of other industries, the little lumber camp was eventually transformed into the present enterprising city, which is daily attracting homeseekers from less favored lands. Tacoma, aside from the natural advantages which control many industries, has scenic attributes, which have in no little degree contributed to its present status among the cities of the Far West. Its sublimely beautiful Mount Tacoma, wrapped in eternal snows and aglow at morn and evening with a radiant glory of red and gold, has attracted the tourist who has ever been impressed with its lofty majesty. Here, too, one may find in close proximity, shining lakes, the island-dotted Sound with its ever-changing waters, and forests of giant spruce and cedar which form an ever-green backdrop to the enchanting scene. Small wonder then, that many a nature-loving tourist, who finds it possible to drive in a few hours from sea level to the glaciated regions of the nearby mountains on a warm summer day, is captivated by the entrancing beauty, and returns resolved to make Tacoma his future home.

Parallel with the steady growth of the city and its industries was the philanthropic activity which provided institutions for the poor, the sick, and the destitute. Among those who recognized the possibilities for useful service among the throngs of Western home-seekers on the Pacific shores, were the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, who, in 1891, established St. Joseph's Hospital in Tacoma when the city was scarcely more than a "far-flung outpost of civilization."

In order to secure means for building the proposed institution, Sister Dulzelina and Sister Benevenuta came to Tacoma in the fall of 1890, and succeeded in obtaining, through voluntary contributions from the charitable people of the city, sufficient money to erect a small brick structure on ground which had been donated by Father Hylebos. Until the hospital was ready for occupancy, the Sisters were obliged to live for some time in the humble environment of a little building which had been erected for a laundry. As there were no conveniences for housekeeping, they were forced to endure much discomfort after their long day's walk of many miles, often in drizzling rain, to solicit aid.

On October 11, 1891, the hospital was dedicated by His Grace Archbishop Gross. The work of caring for the sick was then begun under the superiorship of Sister Philomena. During the first year, fifty-one patients were cared for, while the following year the records show that two hundred eighty were admitted to the hospital. During the years 1892 and 1893, when even the most prosperous had to share in the sorrows of the great financial panic, the Sisters were at times sorely distressed in meeting payments on the outstanding debt. But God's Providence watched over the little enterprise, and good friends came to their assistance so that the work prospered.

The increasing patronage of the hospital resulted in making an addition to the old building only seven years after the opening of the institution. By the year 1913, St. Joseph's was entirely out of proportion to the great institutions which had been springing up in the rapidly growing city, and an entirely new building was planned. The beginning of the work of the new St. Joseph's was due to the progressive spirit of Mother Kilian who was then provincial superior of the Sisters of St. Francis in the West. Under her supervision the great building, which is alike an ornament to the city of Tacoma and the glory of the Community in the West, was planned and rapidly brought to completion. "When the American College of Surgeons in 1919 rated St. Joseph's Hospital as Class A," says an appreciative writer, "they gave official recognition to the high professional excellence of the institution of which Tacoma has always been justly proud. This efficient hospital conducted by the Sisters of St. Francis is generally recognized by virtue of its personnel, scientific equipment, and general up-to-the-minute facilities as one of the foremost hospitals of the Northwest. Its service to the community can scarcely be estimated from the number of patients cared for, even though that number run close to five thousand as it did last year." The present commodious hospital with its three hundred beds, modern equipment, and skilled surgery, is quite a contrast to the humble beginning in the building on the corner of 18th and J Streets, now used as the nurses' home. In 1891, when the hospital was founded, eleven Sisters were engaged in caring for the sick, while at the present time twenty-five Sisters and nearly one hundred nurses are on duty attending to the numerous patients. On July 4, 1913, the new St. Joseph's was begun and two years later was dedicated. With the recent completion of the new wing and the addition of the best modern equipment, St. Joseph's offers to its patrons the most commendable service.

While the success of the institution has been due to the concerted efforts of the devoted Sisters who have assisted in caring for the sick, the burden of the responsibility has rested upon superiors who have securely directed the affairs of the institution at various times when prudence and wise foresight were demanded for the successful continuance of the work. Among these able superiors who rendered long and valuable service at St. Joseph's are: Sister Helena, in whom were happily blended the qualities of a noble religious and an able financier; Sister Afra, one of the pioneers who braved the hardships of the humble beginnings and assisted in the later development of the hospital; and Sister Demetria, who ably directed the work of the new St. Joseph's. Of those who remained in the ranks as inferiors and signalized themselves by long and devoted service, we find Sister Anacleta, who was for almost thirty years on the nursing staff, and in her humble ministrations won the admiration of all classes—the rich and the poor; those of all religious beliefs as well as unbelievers. "Sister Anacleta," says her panegyrist, "was one of those rare souls whose death has only served to make her live more vividly in the hearts of those who knew her. Many a person was brought to pray by Sister Anacleta and many a one was brought back to the straight path by her kind words and prayers. Her life proved her to be a holy, humble religious, exceedingly kind to all who knew her—one of those hidden saints who make the world a better place because of their existence."

In the fall of 1912, the Sisters of St. Francis opened their first parochial school mission in the West in St. Leo's parish, Tacoma. Here two Sisters were engaged by the Jesuit Fathers to teach the small boys of the school. Eight years later, the girls of the parish, who had been attending other schools, were admitted for the first time, and additional teachers were employed. At the present time, the work has been extended to include the eight grades of the grammar department and four years of high school. Both boys and girls attend the grade school classes in which there are at present four hundred fifty pupils. The girls' high school, which was opened in the year 1926 with classes in only the first year work, has now an attendance of nearly one hundred pupils.

The opening of St. Leo's High School has been long desired by the parishioners who have been obliged either to send their girls to the public school, or to make great sacrifices to have them attend a Catholic school at a considerable distance from their homes. Every advantage of efficient equipment and thoroughness of instruction is offered the pupils, as well as facilities for physical development and recreational activities.

The care of destitute children was, from the inception of the Franciscan Community in Philadelphia, considered among its most commendable works of charity. The institution in Spokane had prospered, and untold good was being accomplished in preserving the faith and morality of the little ones who might otherwise never have been instructed in their religious duties. A similar institution was needed in Tacoma, which, on account of its rapid growth, was gradually being confronted with the problem of properly caring

SACRED HEART ACADEMY
Klamath Falls, Oregon

ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL
Portland, Oregon

ST. ANNE'S HOME
Tacoma, Washington

for its numerous dependent children. This was finally secured through the efforts of Reverend Father Weibel, S. J., and other zealous priests who were ably assisted by prominent business men of Tacoma. A suitable location for the Home was found in South Tacoma. This was a twenty-acre plot on which was a large old-fashioned house. The building was remodeled and repaired, and within three months was completely equipped without any outstanding debts.

The Sisters entered upon their work February 10, 1921, under the able superiorship of Sister Aquinata, who for several years had been identified with the work of various Western missions. Fortunate indeed were the children to be placed in charge of this good religious, who had truly the heart of a mother, and watched lovingly over the little ones confided to her care.

Magnanimous have been the good people of Tacoma in their support of the institution which is a monument to their charity. The Home which they have provided and maintained is most suitably located to secure the well-being of the little ones. Surrounded as they are by beautiful fields and woods, they enjoy the pure air and freedom of the country. As St. Anne's has a capacity sufficient for only a small number of children, it has the semblance of a home rather than an institution. With the possibility of more watchful care and personal supervision of the Sisters, the training of the children presents fewer difficulties, and is more effective than in larger groups; while the home spirit which prevails adds a charm to the children's surroundings which in some measure compensates for their parentless fate.

The history of St. Anne's Home which is today one of the leading charitable institutions of Tacoma "is but a repetition of the little acorn grown into a stately oak." Small were its beginnings; and the great good that has been accomplished has surpassed even the most sanguine expectations of its charitable benefactors.

Judging from the location of the missions which the Sisters of St. Francis conduct in the West, it would seem that they had followed the tradition that the children of the nature-loving Saint of Umbria choose those sites where the master hand of the great Creator is most clearly revealed. Tacoma with its ethereal mountain, its silvery lakes, and evergreen forests, might well assume the title of the "City Beautiful;" but a few miles distant to the south, it encounters a rival in the great city which has sprung up at the confluence of the mighty Columbia and the beautiful Willamette—the "Rose City," "the summer capital of the land of outdoors." While Tacoma points with laudable pride to the majestic mountain which has given it prominence among the cities of the Pacific slopes, Portland is synonymous with its wonderful Mount Hood, whose snowy peak, rising spirit-like from out the mists, looms up in the distance in ever changing glory, and "raises the beholder from the level of the dust and places him athrob with the Infinite."

Among these charming scenes the Sisters of St. Francis established themselves in the fall of 1925, when they opened St. Patrick's School, which had been accepted at the request of the most Reverend Archbishop Howard. Here the Community, eight in number, was welcomed by the genial pastor, Reverend Charles Smith, who gave them every encouragement in their new field of labor.

As only the eight grades of the elementary school are taught at St. Patrick's, the work of the Sisters is to lay the foundation for higher work. In many cases, however, the pupil's school days are ended when he finishes the eighth grade, as conditions require that he then join the great army of toilers; hence, there is urgent reason that he should be prepared mentally, morally, and physically for life's duties. As the children of the parish are docile and well disposed to comply with all that is required to keep up the high standard of the school, the Sisters' task of teaching them has been a pleasant one, and the progress of the pupils has been very encouraging.

East of the Cascade Mountains in the famous lake region of Klamath County, Oregon, the Sisters of St. Francis, in 1924, assumed charge of Sacred Heart Academy in Klamath Falls, which, for seven years previous to their coming, had been conducted by the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, Kentucky. Owing to the great lumber industry, the city of Klamath Falls has been rapidly assuming great importance among the cities of Oregon; and the recent completion of the railroad, which has brought it into communication with the coast, has added to its attractive features. Its accessibility from far and near has been a great advantage to those who wished to send their children to a convent school; for here are offered both a pleasant home for resident pupils, and opportunities for a thorough education. A grade school as well as a standard high school is maintained by the Sisters in Klamath Falls, both of which are at present crowded to their utmost capacity. The music and art departments, which are thoroughly organized, have likewise attracted a large patronage. Extensive improvements have recently been made in the main building through remodeling and refinishing; while a large addition has been built at an approximate cost of $25,000. With the addition of new equipment and the adoption of the best methods of instruction, the academy which was opened under the able superiorship of Sister Bonosa is efficient in every department.

The progress of the Sisters' work in Klamath Falls since they took charge of Sacred Heart Academy five years ago, has been most encouraging. In view of the rapid development of the resources in Southern Oregon, there is every indication of a successful future for the academy. There is in addition, the hopeful outlook that the Sisters may engage in additional activities in this God-favored region and thus assist in making it possible that the spiritual development of its enterprising population may keep pace with material progress.

CHAPTER 4

Missions Among the Indians

"What wonder that I lingered there
With Nature's children!"

FROM the day that Christopher Columbus piously planted the Cross on the little island of San Salvador in sight of the wondering natives, a new mission field was opened up for the Church, in which some of the most illustrious Apostles of Christianity have devoted their lives to the righting of the Indians' wrongs, by bringing them within the pale of civilization, and by making them inheritors of the treasure of Faith, which alone can compensate for the loss of their happy freedom.

"No prouder record stands to our credit," says Father Ganns, "our histories can show no prouder page, than that of the Catholic Church, defending, protecting, and shedding its blood to save the Indian."

Foremost of her heroes is the Great Admiral himself, whose discoveries unlocked the treasure house of the Church for the simple inhabitants of the New World. The pious Isabella, Spain's queenly patroness of the Indian, impressed by the glowing accounts that Columbus had given of their gentleness and simplicity, and regarding them as her special heaven-sent charges, ordered that they be instructed in the Faith and be treated with the greatest clemency; and in her last will and testament made known her desire that "justice and Christian equity" be meted out to her dear red children.

The saintly Isabella has long since gone to her reward; but her desires have been fulfilled by others with hearts as noble as that which beat beneath the royal robes of Spain's loved queen. The world bows in reverence at the name of the intrepid Las Casas crossing the ocean sixteen times in unseaworthy crafts, in spite of repeated shipwrecks, to plead the Indian's cause; of a Father Marquette in the same holy cause, making his way through the unbroken forests and over the bleak prairies of the North; of a Father de Smet, setting out on a journey of a thousand miles over trackless mountains to the dusky roamers of the Far West. The South, too, had its saintly missionaries, such as Father Junipera Serra, founder of the famous California missions. Though crippled, this zealous servant of God traversed on foot the six hundred miles of his territory with heroic fortitude, instructing, baptizing, and confirming thousands of the simple native redskins. Again, Father Catala, the Franciscan Apostle of the Santa Clara Indians, challenges our admiration for his almost superhuman labors in behalf of the red men.

Undaunted at the prospects of enduring the greatest hardships for the uplifting of the downtrodden Indian, are others quite as renowned in the history of the Church, no less than thirty of whom have sanctified American soil with martyr's blood.

Consecrated Daughters of the Church, also, have had their share in the glory of bearing the message of the Great Spirit to the poor nature-worshiping red men. By their gentle ministrations they have been influential in tempering the savage nature of the Indian who had been made to feel in his years of struggle for existence that "his hand was against everyone, and everyman's hand was against him."

In our own day, engaged in this God-inspired mission is Mother Katherine Drexel. Through her own personal service and the assistance of her many associates in the religious Order which she founded, she may justly be regarded as one of the greatest friends the Indian has ever known.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia, too, have taken an active part in the work of evangelizing the Indian, and regard no work as deserving of more whole-souled service.

We shall, then, for a brief time leave the consideration of other works of the Institute, and ask our readers to accompany us in spirit on a trip to the various reservations in the West, where the Sisters are endeavoring to teach their dusky charges all that will make them good and useful citizens.

For those who have a true missionary spirit, it is a joy to labor among these people who are forced by legislation to live pent up on reservations, deprived of that free life to which their nature inclines them. "They resemble," says Irving, "those wild plants which thrive best in the shade of the forest, but shrink from the hand of cultivation, and perish beneath the influence of the sun." By nature, careless of future needs, they must be taught habits of thrift and industry. Naturally "they toil not, neither do they spin." Although, traditionally, various tribes are gifted in some handiwork, such as that of basket weaving, making blankets, and molding clay, there is for the vast majority no settled pursuit. To the artificial life of civilized races, the Indian has not been able to accommodate himself, and clings tenaciously to his crude wigwam and his characteristic careless habits of living. The only hope of the race lies in taking the children from the environment of their poor homes, where there is no encouragement to advance, and in keeping them in schools, where they may acquire habits of industry and learn how to adapt themselves to the refinements of civilized life.

We shall now see on our visit to the missions in charge of the Sisters of St. Francis what is being done to better the condition of the Indian. As we proceed westward, we shall first stop at Purcell, Oklahoma. The Sisters entered upon their mission here in 1887, before the great wave of westward migration had swept over the Indian's hunting grounds and despoiled him of the choicest portion of his domain. Purcell lay in that region occupied by the Chickasaws—one of the tribes that Jackson's administration decreed should leave their southern home, where their ancestors had dwelt for years in undisturbed possession of the mighty forests.

The school of which the Sisters were to take charge, had been provided through the munificence of Miss Katherine Drexel, the present Mother Katherine of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. The situation of the building is most picturesque, standing out as it does on an eminence, having at its base the treacherous Canadian River, and by its loftiness dominating the whole surrounding fertile valley.

Sister Barbara, who was placed in charge of the mission, had assigned her as assistants Sisters Patricia, Chrysologas, and Joachim, who bravely shared with her the poverty and its attendant privations which the little mission had in store for them. Undaunted at the prospects of continued trials, the Sisters, with God's help and their own native thrift and industry, soon transformed the barren surroundings into a little "terrestrial paradise." In a short time, a magnificent garden of eight acres was under cultivation and yielded all the vegetables necessary for the support of the institution. In a few years, a fine orchard and vineyard furnished choice fruits; and in order to supply the house and garden with water a windmill was installed. In the passing years, the attention of the Sisters has not been confined to the utilitarian alone. The æsthetic has also received due consideration in the adornment of the grounds. In front of the main building is a verdant lawn and flower-garden intersected by serpentine walks and beautiful trees of many varieties. In the center of this charming spot, her face turned towards the convent, stands a statue of Our Lady which seems to invite the beholder to place himself under her protection. And indeed we may well believe this good Mother has interested herself in behalf of the devoted Sisters who have ever confided themselves and their little charges to her loving care.

Eminent success has attended the efforts of the Sisters at St. Elizabeth's School, Purcell. Here during the course of years have assembled children representing several tribes—Choctaws, Chickasaws, Cherokees, Pottawotomies, Kickapoos, and Caddoes. Although they differ in language and customs, they have been happily brought into spiritual kinship by the influence of religion, and have lived in peace and harmony. They have not only received a solid Christian education, but have also acquired much valuable secular knowledge. When particular aptitude for music and drawing has been manifested, the Sisters have provided that the æsthetic taste should likewise be cultivated. But above all, the girls are prepared for future usefulness by careful training in ordinary home duties. After several years' residence with the Sisters, the young girls are well equipped for conducting the affairs of their own homes with efficiency, and for fulfilling their obligations to God and society.

An attempt to give a fair estimate of the good that has been accomplished by the Sisters in their forty-three years of service in Purcell would be futile; but in viewing that which is apparent, the Sisters may well rejoice that their sacrifices have not been in vain.

We shall now ask our readers to accompany us to Anadarko, Oklahoma, which is about eighty miles southwest of Purcell on the Kiowa Indian Reservation. Here through financial assistance given

INDIAN MISSIONS

1. ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL
Anadarko, Oklahoma

2. ST. STEPHEN'S SCHOOL
St. Stephen, Wyoming

3. ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL
Chamberlain, S. D.

4. ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL
Tacoma, Washington

by Mother Katherine Drexel, Father Isidore, a Benedictine priest, built St. Patrick's School.

As the Sisters of St. Francis had been very successful in their work in Purcell, Father Isidore applied to Mother Agnes for Sisters to take charge of this school also. The mission was accepted and placed under the superiorship of Sister Ameliana. Late in the summer of 1892, the Sisters left Philadelphia to begin their labors among the Indians. When they arrived in Anadarko, they found to their surprise that the convent which was to have been ready for occupancy, had not yet been begun. This necessitated their returning to Purcell. Three weeks afterwards, they were informed that their convent was well on the way to completion. Soon after receiving this information, they set out again for Anadarko, and upon their arrival found that one room of the building had been boarded up for their use. The roof had not yet been shingled, nor were the windows and doors in place. As there seemed to be no alternative but to make the best of the situation, the Sisters set to work with the few resources at hand to make the place habitable. They soon had the windows and doors sufficiently secure to insure them against Indian intruders; and with a few boards and carpenters' tools they manufactured some needed articles of furniture. Theirs was real missionary life; and they realized that they should have to practice poverty very rigidly.

Beyond the little village of Anadarko, stretched miles of prairie lands with no visible signs of habitation except the dismal-looking tepees that sheltered the Indians when they returned from their hunting trips up the river. How these scenes contrasted with those of the Eastern States with their cultivated fields and beautiful homes! If there was an occasional longing for a glimpse of the old homeland, who would censure the Sisters, missionaries though they were? By the nineteenth of November, the Feast of St. Elizabeth, the building which was destined for school purposes was blessed, although it was far from being completed.

The Indian children straggled in one by one, until by the twenty-fifth of November, there were thirty-five representing several tribes—Choctaws, Kiowas, Comanches, and Wichitas. With this little band of Indians who knew nothing of the restraints of civilized life, the Sisters began their task of teaching.

For seven years the Sisters continued their work at the mission, and were able with the help of kind benefactors to make many improvements in their surroundings, when they met with their first great sorrow. This was the loss of their building which was completely destroyed by fire. Their work was not long delayed, however, as Father Isidore, within eight days, had classrooms fitted up in the old Methodist Indian School. By soliciting aid, the good priest found it possible to rebuild St. Patrick's, and in March, 1911, the new building was ready for occupancy. Before the close of the year, through the efforts of Father Ketcham, St. Patrick's School was placed under government control with Father Isidore as superintendent. This created much controversy and led later to the memorable "garb order" of Commissioner Valentine, which stipulated that Sisters employed in Indian government schools should wear a secular dress while on duty. Fortunately, through the intervention of President Taft, the Sisters were allowed to retain their religious habit; and since this little victory their enemies have left them in comparative peace. The school has been generously equipped, and under the care of the Sisters hundreds of Indian children have not only been instructed in the Catholic Faith, but have also been prepared to become intelligent citizens of the great country which has restricted their freedom only to bring them greater blessing.

Retracing our way eastward about twenty miles over "God's great open spaces" where the Indians and buffalo roamed unrestrained in the not far-distant past, we come to Chickasha, Oklahoma, on the Washita River at the edge of the heavy-bearing cotton district of the South. Here we find an enterprising city a-hum with industry, and its bustling, wide-awake inhabitants hastening about with an air of prosperity. Among the imposing structures of this newly built city is St. Joseph's School, conducted by the Sisters of St. Francis.

When they entered upon their mission in 1892, they occupied an old frame building which had long been used as a public school. It had been vacant for some time, and the town authorities were eager to dispose of it at a reasonable price. Father Isidore, who had charge of the Indians in the surrounding country, had for some time tried to secure the property for a boarding school; but the owners refused to sell it to him at any price, as they did not wish a Catholic institution established in their midst. But Father Isidore was a real missionary, and was not to be baffled by the first appearance of failure. In order to convince the people of Chickasha that a Catholic school would be a credit to their city, he decided to show them some of the results of the Sisters' work among the Indians by having the children of the school in Anadarko repeat in Chickasha the entertainment which they had given at the close of school. This meant that the Sisters had to go with thirty-five children to Chickasha and make provision for staying there over night. As school had closed and the children were eager to be free and to return to their homes, it was a difficult task to restrain their wild natures even for this rather novel trip. The good intentions of the Sisters, however, sustained them in their efforts.

Having secured farm wagons sufficient in number to transport the children with their blankets, provisions for several meals, and their costumes and other paraphernalia for the play, Sisters Ameliana and Tranquilla started on the long, dusty journey to Chickasha. They arrived in the village in time to find a lodging place for the night and to prepare for the coming entertainment. Strange to say, the only place in the village which could be secured for a shelter for the night was the old vacant school building. And even this, the city authorities very reluctantly permitted them to use.

The entertainment was a grand success. The little Indians so covered themselves with glory that the people entreated Father Isidore to have them remain and repeat the program the following evening. Father felt highly complimented, but as he had already succeeded in convincing the people of the excellent work done at his Catholic school, he deemed it inadvisable to remain. He and the Sisters knew full well what it would mean to hold thirty-five Indians in check for another twenty-four hours.

On that eventful night before the Sisters tucked away their little Indians on the floor of the old school building, they gathered around them their dusky actors and actresses to thank God for the success of their efforts, and added a fervent prayer that Father Isidore might prevail upon the town authorities to sell the property so that he might establish there his long desired school. Early the next morning blessed medals were buried on the four corners of the lot on which the building stood, and to St. Joseph was entrusted the task of getting possession of the property.

The good Saint succeeded in holding down the claim, for a few months afterwards the authorities were willing to sell the property to Father Isidore at a reasonable price. The money for the purchase was advanced by Mother Katherine Drexel, on condition that a certain number of Indians should be educated there every year.

As the school at Anadarko had progressed under the Sisters of St. Francis, Father Isidore again applied to Mother Agnes for Sisters to conduct the new mission. There was no hesitation in accepting the school as the work done at the other institutions among the Indians had been very satisfactory. Accordingly, four Sisters were sent to Chickasha under the superiorship of Sister Concordia. A day school was conducted the first year with an enrollment of one hundred children, only one of whom was a Catholic. No religious instruction could be given, nor was even a prayer said in the classroom.

As there was very little income from the day school, the Sisters had to feel the want of many things. Shortly after their arrival, an inventory was taken of their belongings, which read as follows: Four beds, a stove, a table, six cups and saucers, and a few kitchen utensils. For a laundry, a tent was erected, which in pleasant weather was too dark and in rainy weather, very muddy.

The following year, a few Indian resident pupils were admitted. The Sisters' income was then increased and improvements were made so that a greater number of boarders could be cared for.

As the school steadily increased in patronage and the little village became more prosperous, the old building began to look very shabby, so that a campaign was begun in the fall of 1920 for a new brick structure. This resulted in the magnificent building which we see today, complete in every detail and a glory to the city of Chickasha, which in the passing years has learned to appreciate the blessing of having a Catholic school in its midst.

At the present time there are nearly two hundred pupils attending St. Joseph's School, among whom are children of the most prominent families of Chickasha. Besides, there are eighty resident pupils from the Choctaw and Chickasha tribes for whose education the government provides an allowance. These are, for the most part, children of the industrious, well-to-do Indians, who have good homes and take part in all the civic and social activities of the community in which they reside.

The good that has been accomplished at St. Joseph's School in Chickasha, has amply repaid those who in the thirty years of its existence have labored for its advancement. The memorable play given by the Anadarko children, which initiated the work, proves the truth of the words, "God works in a mysterious way." It also reminds us that, sanctified by a good intention, even such an ordinary activity as a school entertainment may effect great things for God's glory.

Pursuing our journey westward, we shall next consider the work done at St. Stephen's Mission among the Arapahoes in far-distant Wyoming.

At the time the mission was undertaken, in 1892, St. Stephen's was far remote from any white settlement, in a lonely, desolate region where the silence was unbroken by either bird or beast. A school had been conducted some time previously by two different Orders of Religious; but conditions were too discouraging for either to remain long enough to accomplish work with any lasting results. The Jesuit Fathers had charge of the mission, and had labored long and faithfully; but with the Indians scattered over a vast area, their visits to the different camps could be seldom made, so it was impossible to keep in touch with the scattered flock.

Mother Agnes, in considering the difficulties of the mission, had confidence that among the Sisters there could be found those who had the qualities which would insure the successful outcome of the work among the wild, untutored Indian children of Wyoming. The leader of such a mission band would have to be fearless, patient, persevering, and above all, prayerful. And for this position she found all the requirements in Sister Eugenia, who had received the holy habit of St. Francis with that distinguished band who were privileged to be the first to be received in the new chapel of Our Lady of Angels, in the year 1880.

On the Feast of St. Clare, 1892, Sister Eugenia, with five companions, left the city of Philadelphia on the long and perilous journey which was to bear them to a country unknown save through reports which were sufficiently discouraging to intimidate even the bravest heart. Of this band composed of Sisters Eugenia, Colette, Modesta, Thaddea, Amalberga, and Evarista, only the superior and the two last named survive at present. A few weeks later, Sisters Liberata, Paphnutia, and Secunda joined the company, so that the Community had then nine members.

After a tedious journey of several days, the Sisters reached Rawlins, Wyoming, about ten o'clock at night. The present beautiful city of Rawlins could not at that distant day boast of even a station, nor anything else except a few little houses standing out on the bare prairie. The railroad agent lived in a one-room shanty near the place where the train stopped; and thither the Sisters were invited to go. As the humble home had but one bed and two chairs, there was not much prospect of finding a resting place for the night. Two of the Sisters were, however, urged to stay as the owners insisted that they themselves could find lodging elsewhere. As they were very tired, the Sisters gladly accepted the hospitality offered them. The good people found a place for the other four Sisters in another little house near-by, and here they made themselves as comfortable as the poor accommodations would permit.

The stage that was to convey the Sisters to Landor, one hundred eighty miles distant, was scheduled to leave at seven o'clock in the morning. When it arrived they found that it was merely a canvas-covered wagon with accommodations for only four travelers. This, then, necessitated that two of the Sisters remain in Rawlins until the next day. Greatly disappointed at the thought of the little company's being separated, Sister Eugenia selected two of the bravest to wait till the next morning. The other four rather fearfully got into the cumbersome old stage behind the desperate-looking driver, none too gentle in his speech, and were soon on their way. It was a hot day in August; and the alkali dust rose in great clouds as the horses rushed along at a break-neck speed up one hill and down another, urged on by the loud vociferations of the impatient driver. Every ten miles horses were exchanged, as no animal, however hardy, could endure the terrible strain of being driven longer at so great a rate through the heat and dust. The Sisters had had no breakfast, and the constant jolting, coupled with fear as they were tossed from one side of the stage to the other, affected each one in much the same way as a violent storm at sea.

When noon came, the driver drew up his tired steeds at a little dust-covered tent standing out on the prairie, where lunch was for sale. A few minutes' rest from jolting was very agreeable to the Sisters, although they were too sick to relish anything to eat. The driver regaled himself with a good dinner and the contents of a flask which gave him new energy for the rest of the day. In less than an hour he was ready to resume the journey. Having taken his place in the stage, he brandished his long whip and mercilessly applied it to the poor horses which leaped forward again at full speed. The travelers once more resigned themselves into God's hands, and with stout hearts made the best of the situation.

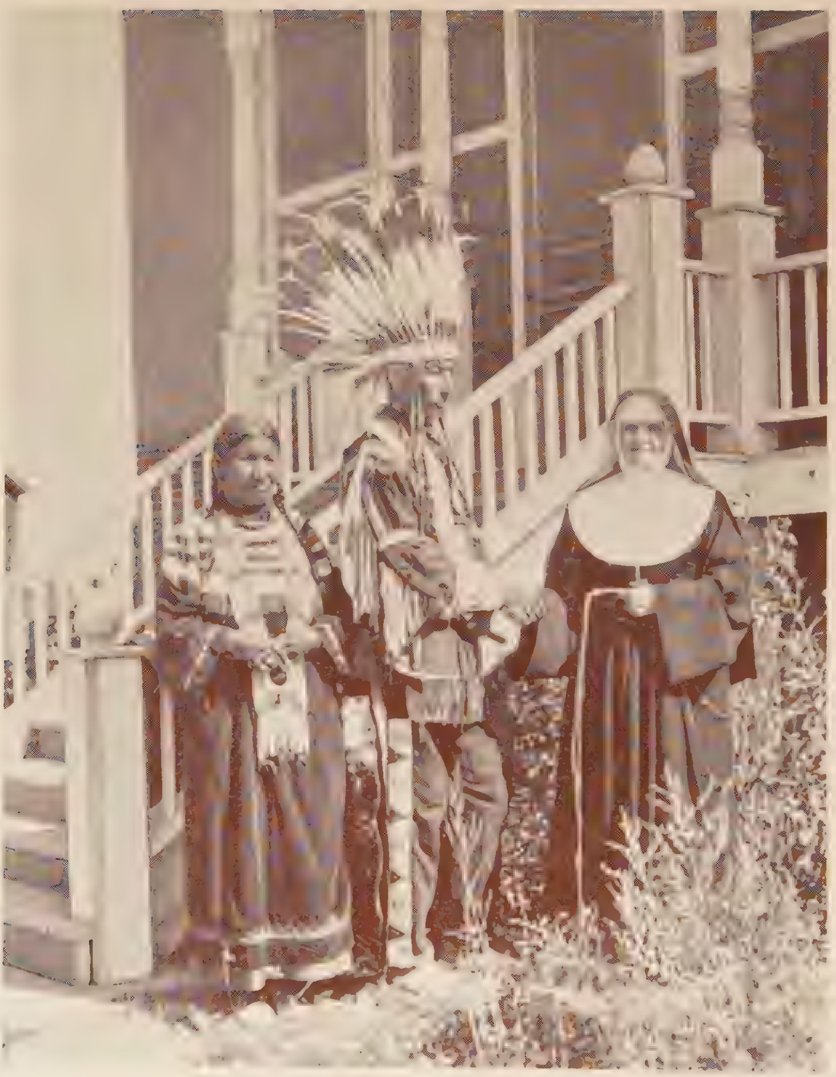
The afternoon wore away and night came on, dark and lonely, with nothing to break the silence except the rumbling of the clumsy stage and the hoarse mutterings of the noisy, half-drunken driver; while the feeble light from an old greasy lantern was the only guide that gave any security against being hurled over the steep cliffs. Daylight was indeed welcome after the weary hours of the long night, during which no one had been refreshed by a moment's sleep.

The most exciting part of the journey was that over Beaver Hill. When this was reached, the driver, in no very encouraging tone, informed the travelers that the Company would take no risk for lives, and gave them the choice either of facing the danger of being dashed to death by riding, or of walking down the steep hill. As the Sisters had begun their journey in the hope of at least a few years of missionary life among the Indians, they took no chances and walked. At two o'clock in the afternoon, they reached Landor, which was still twenty-five miles from St. Stephen's. Here they were accosted by a kind-faced gentleman with a long beard. From appearances he had been traveling, as he wore a linen duster and a little, tan skull cap. This was no other than Father Furnell, the Jesuit priest who had charge of the mission, and had come to convey them to their new home. The tired travelers were first taken to the hotel, where they partook of a light lunch. As Father had room in his buggy for only two Sisters, it was necessary that two should remain in Landor over night. Arrangements were made with the mail carrier to convey them to the mission the following day. The other two, Sisters Eugenia and Amalburga, went with Father

Furnell. That night at eight o'clock Sister Eugenia and her companion got the first glimpse of St. Stephen's Mission and found a place to rest their tired nerves.

The next day they were joined by their companions, although their baggage did not arrive for two weeks. As they carried no supplies with them, they were, therefore, obliged to submit to considerable inconvenience.

Soon the Sisters began the work of renovating the building and of preparing for the opening of school. In the meantime work was impeded by the illness of Sister Eugenia, who contracted mountain fever. A doctor was summoned from Shoshone, who charged thirty dollars for his visit. This was a large sum of money for the poor missionaries who had scarcely enough to buy the necessaries of life. Being obliged to subsist on very meager fare and to perform the most exhausting labors, they were severely tried. Many, indeed, less resolute would have been willing to return to Philadelphia, even at the risk of another hazardous stage journey. But God blessed their good will, and by September they opened the doors of St. Stephen's to all the little Indians whom the good Fathers could "round up" on their visitation to their scattered flock. There were eighty of them, apparently as untamable as the wildest bronchos. Accustomed as they had been to roaming the prairies all day long, and at night throwing themselves on the floor in an old tepee, or out on a hillside under the starry heavens, it was no easy task to induce them to prepare themselves properly for bed and to get into it and go to sleep. Not one of the children could speak a word of English, so it was only a waste of energy to tell them what to do. Only by patient endurance was it possible to bring them into submission. It required the services of one man who kept a horse saddled all day long to catch the run-away children. Good Sister Paphnutia, who had charge of the boys, thinking one day that she would give them a treat, decided to take them to the river which was not far distant. The air was exhilarating, and the little lads' desire to be free impelled them to rush pell-mell down the hill and into the river in spite of Sister's pleading to come back. Everyone got safely across, and with one grand salute to the lonely Sister on the hillside, they rushed on out of sight



A MEETING OF CHIEFS, ST. STEPHEN'S MISSION, ST. STEPHEN, WYOMING
REV. MOTHER M. KILIAN, O. S. F., AND CHIEF GOES-IN-LODGE OF THE ARAPAHO INDIAN TRIBE

and hearing; and not till nightfall did they again make their appearance at the mission.

The question of providing food for their charges was a serious one. The year after their arrival, the Sisters industriously set to work to make a garden. Beans, cabbages, and potatoes all came forth with promise of an abundant harvest. But lo! One day a destructive hailstorm cut everything to the ground.

The good priest in charge of the mission succeeded in building himself a house. All was completed except the windows, and he was planning on moving to his new home in a short time. But alas! He, too, had to suffer disappointment; for one night the whole building sank down in the quicksand, and there was not the slightest vestige of it visible the next morning. The good Father was surely disheartened, but thanked God sincerely that he had not suffered the same fate as his house.

The Indian interpreter at the mission lived in a little house not far distant from the school. One evening when he and his young Indian wife returned from a long day's trip on the reservation, they found their little house entirely empty,—chairs, bed, table,—all were gone. The Indians at once organized a search party and found the culprit—a white man. The owner of the stolen goods came home one day with every article, but was so angry that he and his good wife dressed up again in their old Indian costumes and left the mission. They declared that they could learn nothing from men who stole all they had.

These first days at the mission call forth memories of many a hardship, the endurance of which, however, has been crowned magnificently, as St. Stephen's today is one of the most flourishing of the Indian missions of the West. While at first the Arapaho seemed quite inimical to the kindly virtues, nevertheless it has been found that back of his warring nature, his taciturnity, and his stoicism, there is a heart keenly sensitive to the slightest wrong and appreciative of the least act of kindness. What Irving says of Indians in general may be applied to the Arapahoes in particular. "The Indian's sensibilities," he says, "are not diffused over so wide a surface as those of the white man, but they run in steadier and deeper channels."

The little Arapahoes are particularly lovable and docile, and have shown capabilities in various lines of work which reveal intelligence of a high order. The boys have shown great aptitude for farming and mechanical pursuits; while the girls have been eminently successful in needlework, as well as in all kinds of home duties. "The girls' school at St. Stephen's," says an appreciative writer, "has done splendid work in uplifting the standard of the tribe. The white settlers of the neighborhood, irrespective of creed, who compare the Arapaho woman of today with the woman of former times, are all agreed that the girls educated at the mission have already vastly bettered the moral conditions of camp life among their people."

From the Arapaho Mission, a two days' journey on the Union Pacific will bring us to Pendleton, Oregon, whence we shall proceed by automobile a distance of ten miles to St. Andrew's School on the Umatilla Reservation. Here just forty years ago, Sister Ivo, with four companions, Sisters Lucretia, Ludovica, Paphnutia, and Theodula began their labors under very trying circumstances.

For their future home they found an unfinished frame house standing on a barren hillside, with mountains in the distance enveloped in snow, and before them a vast stretch of desolate prairie. As it was the month of February, which that year was unusually cold and stormy, they had many hardships to endure. For beds they gathered in straw, which having been exposed to the weather, was damp and cold; and as they had very little bedding, their rest at night was by no means comfortable. Added to the depressing situation was the mournful cry of the hungry coyotes out on the near-by hillsides. With the snow sweeping through the openings in the walls, and not a very generous supply of fuel to warm the rooms, there was not much from a human viewpoint to attract the Sisters to this new mode of life in the West. Happy were those indeed who could exclaim with St. Andrew, the patron of their new home, "O good Cross, so long desired!"

When sufficient preparation had been made for receiving pupils, the announcement was made to the Indians by the Jesuit priest in charge of the mission, that they should bring their children to the Sisters to be cared for and educated. As the Indians have great affection for their little ones, few could be induced to make the sacrifice of parting with them; so that when the day for opening arrived only thirteen were brought to the school. After the Indians became more confident, however, the number was increased to such an extent that there was scarcely room to accommodate them.

With the co-operation of zealous pastors, great good has been accomplished among the Umatilla, Cayuse, and Walla Walla tribes on the reservation. Among the pioneer priests who were of greatest assistance to the Sisters in their work at St. Andrew's was Very Reverend Joseph Cataldo, S. J., whose heroic labor in behalf of the Indians of various tribes has given him a prominent place in the history of the great Northwest. The Umatilla Indians were particularly the dear "children of his heart," and to them he remained sincerely devoted to the last day of his life. In their midst he humbly celebrated his diamond jubilee by conducting a three days' mission; and in Holy Week, only four months later, he returned to his flock, again to urge them to be faithful in their duties to God. On Easter Sunday he said his last Mass in the presence of his dear Indians. The appearance of the venerable priest at the altar, supported by crutches and enfeebled by reason of his advanced age of more than ninety years, was an impressive sight. With his old-time enthusiasm he gave a stirring address in fluent Nez Perce, which proved to be his final message. Later in the day, a decided weakness urged his removal to St. Anthony's Hospital, Pendleton; and there within a few hours he quietly passed away, surrounded by the Sisters of St. Francis who had known and revered him, and to whom he had ever remained a good, kind friend and a prudent adviser.

Among the pioneer Sisters of St. Andrew's whose labors deserve special commendation, is Sister Ludovica, who remained at her post of duty in the kitchen uninterruptedly for thirty years. Her life was that of a hidden saint, spent in performing commonplace duties with a perfection which revealed her high ideals of the religious life. Her habitually cheerful disposition and kindly nature won for her the affection of her companions in religion as well as the little Indians whom she loved most sincerely. In recognition of her devoted services in behalf of the Indians at St. Andrew's, this humble religious received a short time before her death a special commendation from the Holy Father, which was for the good Sister a little foretaste of the joy which was soon to be hers in hearing from the Divine Master the consoling words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Closely associated with Sister Ludovica in her lowly duties was Sister Lucretia, a no less humble religious. Especially was this Sister noted for her genuine simplicity. If she had any attachment in this world, it was most certainly to her work among the Indians at St. Andrew's. During the time the members of the Ku Klux Klan were making their threats about closing the Catholic Schools, some one remarked in jest that through the influence of the Klansmen the Sisters might have to give up the mission. To this Sister replied in her quaint, Irish accent, "Indeed, I shall never move a yard for them." Her daily prayer was that she might live and die with her dear Indians. God heard the prayer of His trustful child, for in a fire which caused the complete destruction of the old building, Sister lost her life. It was the Lord's way of fulfilling the wish of His humble servant; and although it was a terrible calamity, there has arisen the new St. Andrew's which houses comfortably the little Indians for whom Sister Lucretia toiled and prayed, and for whose welfare, we may well believe, she offered the sacrifice of her life.

St. Andrew's School today, with its new, commodious building with modern improvements has been conducive to improving the efficiency of the care given the children, and has caused them to take laudable pride in their achievements. Last year the quality of the work accomplished by the girls was of such high order that they were urged to compete with neighboring schools for prizes offered for the best display. As a result, they received from the Umatilla County School Superintendent the following recognition addressed to the Superior of the Mission: "I am inclosing checks which your girls won at the Pilot Rock Boys' and Girls' Club Show. They won 1st, 2d, and 3d prizes in division one in sewing, and 1st and 2d prizes in handwork. I am glad to give you this information, and to congratulate you on the splendid showing in competition with white girls."

The spiritual fruitage at St. Andrew's is quite as apparent. The children who have returned to their homes have assisted wonderfully in the moral, intellectual, and spiritual uplifting of the tribes among whom may be found sterling Christian characters whose exemplary lives justify the efforts of those who have labored for their advancement.

A two days' journey westward to Blanchet, Washington, will bring us to the first Indian mission undertaken by the Sisters of St. Francis in the Far West. This is St. George's School on the Puyallup Reservation, seven miles north of Tacoma.

Here in the summer of 1888, one hundred forty acres of timber land had been secured through the Catholic Indian Agency for the purpose of establishing an industrial school for Indian children. As the land was densely wooded, it was necessary to make a clearing by felling the great trees before a school could be built. Reverend Charles de Decker, a young Belgian priest, who had offered his services for the distant Indian missions, had been given charge of the scattered Catholic population in this region, and it was through his assistance in clearing the ground and in constructing the building that the opening of the school was greatly hastened.

In answer to an appeal from the Right Reverend Yungers, Mother Agnes gladly accepted the mission, and in the fall of 1888 sent four Sisters from Philadelphia to open the school under the superiorship of Sister Jerome. Through the generosity of Reverend Mother Katharine Drexel, the services of Miss Esther Stevenson, a lay teacher of Philadelphia, were also secured.

When the Sisters arrived at their new home in the woods, the rainy season had already begun, and the gloomy forest reeking with moisture loomed up as a great barrier between them and their sunny Eastern home so far away. We are not surprised then to learn that a feeling of great loneliness stole into the hearts of the missionaries as day after day the rain poured down and the clouds obscured the blue heavens.

The Indians came from far and near to view their new pale-faced neighbors. Intently they regarded the quaint costumes of the Sisters and silently stalked about exploring the house and grounds with no little suspicion. They were by no means hasty in extending a welcome to the newcomers, as past experience had made them distrustful of even those who were most sincerely interested in their welfare.

Within a week after their arrival a contract was completed with the Puyallup Indian Agency by which an appropriation for the education of fifty children was made.

The little Indians were hastily gathered in from the reservation and by the last week in October, the Sisters began their task of teaching the dusky little roamers of the forests the restraints of civilized life. As most of the children were familiar only with the strange jargon spoken in their rude homes, the Sisters were severely tried in their efforts to secure order in the classroom. With present day methods of teaching, they might have been more successful in holding the attention and interest of their pupils; but forty years ago it required considerable tact to hold a restless band of Indian children in check for several hours a day. God blessed the efforts of the Sisters, however, and the little ones at St. George's in time acquired an enviable reputation for piety and obedience. Good Father de Decker loved the Indian children most sincerely and gave valuable assistance in teaching the boys how to do the various kinds of work on the farm. To teach Indian lads who by nature are disinclined to manual labor was by no means an easy task, but Father de Decker won their good will and secured their cooperation by taking an active part himself in all that he required the boys to do.

Through a spirit inimical to the Catholic Church, intriguing enemies succeeded in persuading Government authorities to lessen the appropriation the second year, so that only twenty-five children could be provided for. A year later it was decided that no appropriation whatever would be made as there was ample room at the agency for all the children. From this time the mission was maintained for thirty years chiefly through the private fortune of Father de Decker, who magnanimously offered not only his services but his patrimony as well.

By clearing a large portion of the land, farm products could be raised in quantities so that the mission became largely self-supporting. Kind friends have from time to time assisted in maintaining the school by liberal donations. Among these may be mentioned Miss Stevenson who after a service of thirty years in the classroom left at her death all her savings to be applied to the support of the Indian children.

St. George's today is one of the missions most dear to the

Sisters. It is there in the quiet seclusion of the country that many are privileged to make their annual retreat—close to Nature and to Nature's God. The forests have receded at the fall of the woodman's axe, but still in the distance towering pines lift their pointed tops heavenward and are a quiet reminder of the primitive days when the valiant pioneer Sisters made their way through the pathless forest with only the wind sighing mournfully among the branches to break the stillness.

The spirit of good Father de Decker since his death scarce eight years ago, seems to hover over St. George's Mission and to inspire others to emulate his zeal in laboring for the dear Indian children.

Of the Sisters who rendered devoted service at the mission, none deserves greater commendation than Sister Lidwina, who succeeded to the superiorship a short time after the opening of the school. Sister was a music teacher of considerable ability and her services were in great demand, as there were at that early day few who could teach music at the academies. Sister Lidwina was a self-sacrificing religious and gladly answered the call of obedience to be of service to the Indians. Willingly she joined the poor missionary Sisters in their laborious work of improving their little home in the woods. Day after day she assisted the workmen in digging out the stumps of trees so that a garden might be planted. In her efforts to be helpful she overestimated her strength and impaired her health so that she readily succumbed to an attack of pneumonia.

The death of this good religious made the first vacancy in the ranks of the pioneer Sisters of the Western Province. While the Sisters were deprived of a devoted co-worker, the Indians at St. George's lost a true friend who had been sincerely interested in their welfare.

Through the disinterested service of others in the passing years, the work at St. George's has been continued and as a result many of the boys and girls educated at the mission are now the support of the Church among the Indians of the northwest coast.

On our return to the East, we shall make a brief sojourn in Chamberlain, South Dakota, where the Sisters of St. Francis established their last western mission in the fall of 1928 among the Sioux Indians.

The mission buildings were first used as a seminary by the Viatorian Fathers. As the location did not seem desirable for such an institution, the property was sold to the Fathers of the Sacred Heart, who delegated Father Henry to establish there a school for the Indian children of the surrounding region.

For a year, school was conducted with the assistance of two lay teachers. As the service was motivated merely by dollars and cents, it was not satisfactory. Convinced of the fact that the only way to civilize the Indians was to place them in charge of religious teachers, Father Henry decided to secure the services of Sisters to take charge of the work. After several unsuccessful attempts to find a Community that would accept the mission, Father was advised to apply to Reverend Mother Kilian.

Believing that a personal interview with Reverend Mother would be much more effective than a mere epistolary request, Father Henry made the long trip to the mother house in Glen Riddle. On arriving, he was very much disappointed to learn that Reverend Mother Kilian was not at home. Undaunted by this first appearance of failure, however, he replied to his informant, "Then I shall wait until Reverend Mother returns." He was then urged to remain at the convent, and having been introduced to the Reverend Father MacNamee, the genial chaplain, was given a hearty welcome to Our Lady of Angels, and was very pleasantly entertained.

Upon Reverend Mother's return, Father Henry presented his petition so earnestly that it could not go unheeded. After considerable hesitation, it was decided that four Sisters could be sent to open school in September. Four members were then selected, all of whom felt highly privileged to be chosen for missionary work among the Indians. Sister Quitteria was given the superiorate of the mission; and with high hopes of success the little band made their way in September to the little Dakota village of Chamberlain, which is situated on the old trail once traveled by the early explorers in their search for the great Western Sea.

Although they were eager for sacrifice, it was not possible for the Sisters to check a feeling of loneliness at the sight of the great barren wastes that stretched for miles before them, which appear even at this late day just as they came from the hands of the Creator. Reverend Mother Kilian and Sister Mildred accompanied the Sisters to the mission. Forty-one years before, Reverend Mother had traveled over part of the same way on her journey to distant Oregon, and related pleasant incidents of that memorable trip when travel was far less convenient and the outcome of their mission much less certain.

When the travelers at last arrived in Chamberlain, they were met at the station by Father Henry and conveyed to their future home, the old seminary of the Viatorian Fathers. Time had not dealt any too leniently with the old building, which seemed mutely to express the fact that it had seen better days and hoped to find friends who would respect its former dignity and restore its comeliness.

The Sisters soon put the house in order to admit pupils, and by the middle of September Father Henry had fifty-five Indian children "rounded up" for school. The children of this famous tribe have traits of their forefathers, the old Sioux warriors, and can be dealt with successfully only through tactful study of their peculiar natures. When passion is aroused, war follows inevitably. A proof of this was given during the year previous to the coming of the Sisters. A young warrioress, the leader of the larger girls, succeeded in convincing her companions that the only way to put an end to going to school was to destroy all the books and school equipment. Accordingly, a raid was made on the classroom at an hour when the coast was clear; and all the books, tablets, pens, pencils, and ink bottles were thrown haphazard as rapidly as possible out of the windows, where they lay ready to be floated down the current of the near-by Missouri River at a later hour. The classroom had been completely relieved of its equipment before the culprits were caught. Father Henry appeared on the scene just in time to prevent further destruction, and calmly prevailed upon the miscreants to gather up everything and put it in place again. The reader can well imagine the task. The contents of the ink bottles had been spilled on the floor and books, and the classroom presented as nearly the appearance of a battlefield as the young Sioux warrioresses could make it. Their spirits, aroused by the exciting scene, showed, too, the old tendencies of their fighting ancestry for revenge upon their supposed enemies, their unsuspecting teachers.

Fortunately for the Sisters, no such outburst of Indian nature occurred during the year. The children were extraordinarily docile and very susceptible to good influence. Notwithstanding the fact that the parents of the children are pagans, the little ones readily acquire a knowledge of religion and are inclined to be very pious. When school closes in June they must return to the old environment, so that necessarily much of the good accomplished is undone through the influence of bad example at home.

The children are very poor and must be provided for entirely at the mission. There is no definite means of obtaining money for their support, as there is no industry sufficiently developed to rely on for any revenue. The mission is maintained, therefore, entirely by voluntary contributions. "The Little Flower" seems to be most interested in the little Indians and lets fall her "shower of roses" in the form of food and clothing, so that the children's needs are generously supplied.

South Dakota has been well named "The Sunshine State." Under the genial rays of the bright sun, corn and other crops can be raised in abundance. But at times, when the sun persists in shining, and no rain comes to moisten the parched earth, there are great lamentations, for the crops must necessarily fail. Such was the condition last year, when a promising crop of potatoes at the mission withered away in sight of the Indian boys who had assisted in the planting in eager anticipation of a goodly harvest.

Although there have been disappointments in the work at the mission, the Sisters have high hopes of an abundant spiritual fruitage from their labors among the Sioux Indians, whose seemingly unconquerable natures yield readily to the Gospel of Peace.

PART VIII

The New Century

CHAPTER

1. Changes in the Government of the Institute
2. Closing Scenes in the Life of Mother Agnes
3. Through Darkness Into Dawn
4. Ring Out, Ye Bells, Ring Out

CHAPTER 1

Changes in the Government of the Institute

"Unless the Lord build the house, he labors in vain that builds it."

WE shall for a time interrupt our story of the various foundations of the Institute to consider the government of the Community which has determined its continuance and placed it among the progressive institutions of the Church in America. Rome, it is truly said, was not built in a day. The saints, before the final testimony is given of their pre-eminent virtue, must be subjected to crucial trial which leaves no doubt of their sanctity. So, too, a religious Community, before it is looked upon with favor by the world, must pass through a long period of probation which is to determine its probable permanency and the utility of its mission.

The Sisters of St. Francis, as we have seen, had in the beginning of their Institute been given a rule by their saintly founder, the Right Reverend Bishop Neumann. This had been followed with great exactitude by Mother Francis and her pious companions who were sincerely devoted to their spiritual advancement. But as years passed and the Community increased in numbers, problems were proposed for which there was no solution in the original rule; therefore, additional provisions were necessary. Then, too, the rigid discipline of the former days was fast becoming impractical in the new work which demanded a greater expenditure of physical strength. Besides, as there was gradual lessening of the penitential spirit in the world, there were comparatively few whose spiritual fiber was sufficiently strong to attract them to the Community; hence, modifications in the rule were necessary in order to meet the exigencies of the time. Accordingly, Mother Agnes, after consultation with learned theologians, had a revision made of the old rule; and upon its completion, submitted it to the Most Reverend Archbishop. After receiving the manuscript, His Grace wrote to Mother Agnes as follows: "I will with pleasure examine the Rule and Constitutions you propose to print and will correct and confirm them according to the light which God is pleased to give me."

That the rule was carefully examined and considered by Archbishop Wood is evident from the fact that he did not consent to have it published until the year 1880. He then took upon himself the task of having it printed, and ordered three hundred copies to be sent to the mother house for distribution. Upon receipt of the books, Mother Agnes sent a substantial token of her appreciation; but the check was generously returned. In order, however, to make the gift a memorable one, the money was applied in placing a beautiful memorial window in the chapel on which was inscribed the Archbishop's name.

According to the prescriptions of the new constitutions the office of the general superior was to be filled by election. Accordingly, notices were sent to the various houses that a chapter was to be held at the mother house. The delegates met October 3, 1880, and manifested their approval of Mother Agnes' administration by electing her to continue in the office which she had held for seventeen years by reason of appointment by Archbishop Wood.

No further change in the government of the Institute was made until twenty years afterwards when the Holy See granted to the Community the Decree of Praise, and confirmed for a period of six years a new rule which had been submitted for approval. Finally, on July 7, 1907, the Fisherman's Seal was placed upon the decree which gave definitive approbation of the Holy See to the rules and constitutions of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia; and the Community henceforth assumed a prominent place among the religious Congregations of the Church.

According to the rule in force prior to the year 1900, the government of the Institute had been almost exclusively in the hands of the superior general and her two assistants. The new rule, however, prescribed four consultors, a general secretary, provincial superiors, and a school directress. As the Community had houses in various sections of the country, it was a difficult task for one person to supervise the work of all. Consequently, in 1900, the foundations were formed into provinces each of which was placed under the direction of a provincial superior. The foundations in Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming constituted the Western Province; while the Eastern Province at first embraced all the other missions, which included those from New England to Oklahoma. As this was considered of too vast extent to be supervised by one person, a division of the province was agreed upon by which sixteen houses were constituted a vice province with administrative powers exercised by a vice provincial. In 1903, all the foundations south of the Mason and Dixon Line were included in what was known as the Southern Province.

The new rule made another notable change in the government of the Institute, as henceforth the general superiorship could not be held by one person longer than two successive terms. Mother Agnes had been re-elected at the general chapter in 1900. When the expiration of her term approached, she sent her resignation to His Grace Most Reverend Archbishop Ryan, asking him to make provision for the election of a new superior general. For this purpose a general chapter was convoked in the summer of 1906, which resulted in the election of Reverend Mother Mary Aloysia. Mother Mary Agnes was elected first consultor, and was also appointed superior of Our Lady of Angels, with the privilege of remaining at the mother house the remainder of her life.

Among the pioneer Sisters, none had been more devoted to Mother Agnes than Mother Aloysia whose loyalty had supported her in the dark days when Bishop Wood had delegated to her the general superiorship. It was also Mother Aloysia's continued cooperation that had largely assisted Mother Agnes in the upbuilding of the Community. Years of experience in the superiorship of difficult missions had revealed Mother Aloysia's extraordinary prudence and foresight, and resulted in her appointment as mistress of novices in the year 1891.

Mother Aloysia had been trained by Mother Francis herself, and her deeply religious nature had made her an eager aspirant for perfection in the school of St. Francis. To her novices she imparted the same simple lessons in humility and poverty that she herself had learned so well from the venerable Foundress, and by her own fidelity in practising these virtues, her instructions became doubly effective. It was practical piety that Mother Aloysia wished her novices to acquire—that which would in the midst of distracting duties keep them united to God and working energetically for His glory. "To work is to pray," was a maxim which she often made use of in her instructions to impress upon the minds of her spiritual proteges the dignity of labor and the possibility of "praying without ceasing." Like her own dear patron saint, Mother Aloysia believed the safest penance was the common life, and her admonition to her Sisters was repeatedly, "If you keep the rule, the rule will keep you."

As Mother Aloysia was of a retiring disposition and loved the seclusion of the cloister, it was not without a great sacrifice that she assumed the provincialship of the Eastern Province which was delegated to her in 1900. Six years of valuable service in this position finally led to her election as superior general.

During the first term of her office, Mother Aloysia exhibited considerable conservatism. No new missions were undertaken, as she thought best to strengthen existing foundations. Schools which years before had been established with only a few Sisters had increased in enrollment, and crowded conditions demanded in justice additional teachers. These missions were improved before undertaking other works. During her second term, conditions warranted the opening of eight new missions, all of which were parochial schools. While Mother Aloysia was broad-minded and eager that the Sisters should be of great service, her preference was decidedly for educational work. Like St. John Chrysostom, she believed that the work of the teacher in reproducing in the souls of the young the living image of Christ, far surpassed all other work.

Impressed with the idea that perfection should be the all-important aim of a religious—the supreme ideal, Mother Aloysia was at the same time insistent that the Sisters should become skilled teachers. With zeal tempered with the highest prudence, she encouraged the Sisters to pursue higher study, and heartily endorsed any plan which was suggested that they might become more proficient in their work. But like St. Francis, she discouraged intellectual improvement whenever it hindered the attainment of humility and simplicity. Like him, too, she believed that teaching would be sterile if it did not proceed from a strong interior spirit. And is it not indeed after all, as Segur says, the sap hidden within which gives all richness and fertility to the vine?

The charity and maternal solicitude which Mother Aloysia manifested for the welfare of her spiritual family were such that the Sisters felt most secure in approaching her and making known their difficulties "as to a kind mother." When Wordsworth enthusiastically referred to his mother as "the heart of all my learnings and my love," he expressed the sentiments of one of our American statesmen of a later day who at the time of his greatest exaltation exclaimed: "All that I am and ever hope to be, I owe to my saintly mother." What these great men said of their natural mothers, the Sisters of St. Francis might well say of a devoted superior such as Mother Aloysia, who was in every sense of the word a beloved "mother,"—kind, patient, forbearing, and most earnestly solicitous for every member of her spiritual family. When in the eightieth year of her age Mother Aloysia might reasonably have looked forward to several years of retirement from active duty, in quiet, undisturbed, cloistral seclusion at Our Lady of Angels, she met with a painful accident which left her crippled to such an extent as to necessitate the constant services of an attendant. Her once stately form that towered in noble dignity above her Sisters is now bent low beneath God's chastening hand; but her spirit unbroken by affliction still retains its old-time Franciscan joyousness.

With all the fervor of her youthful days Mother Aloysia still joins in every community exercise—an example to the young aspiring members of the novitiate as well as to her spiritual daughters who in time past looked to her for inspiration and guidance in the religious life. In company with her devoted attendant, Sister Alicia, she frequently makes her way painfully along the corridor that leads to the chapel where she remains wrapt in devotion before the Eucharistic King pleading for graces for the Community she has served so long and faithfully and for the world which is so forgetful of His Sacramental presence.

With that courage which comes from consciousness of duty well performed, Mother Aloysia bears her infirmity and the weight of years, and now almost in sight of the ninetieth milestone in the journey of life she waits serenely and patiently for the coming of the Divine Bridegroom.

CHAPTER 2

Closing Scenes in the Life of Mother Agnes

**"Be the day never so long
Evening comes at last."**

WHEN in 1863, the general superiorship had been delegated to Mother Agnes, there were, we recall, only nine professed Sisters and two missions entrusted to her care; while at the close of her administration forty-three years later, the Community had increased to nine hundred, and the missions numbered sixty. Truly then one may say that the seed sown by Mother Agnes and her devoted associates had brought forth the "hundred-fold." The secret of this great success undoubtedly could be found in Mother Agnes' fidelity to duty and her wonderful confidence in God.

Although she had always been prayerful and recollected in the midst of the most distracting duties, Mother Agnes' longing desire for years had been to be able to spend more time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The cherished dream of her life had been to have Perpetual Adoration established at Our Lady of Angels. Although this was never realized during her life, we may well believe that through her influence it was finally secured, for not quite three years after her death the privilege came quite unexpectedly.

In her eagerness to honor our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, she had always arranged to make her visitations to the various missions during the time of the Forty Hours. Then she would spend as much time as could be spared from her duties in humble adoration of the Eucharistic King.

The Sisters who lived in Mother Agnes' time well remember the long extended chapel services which resulted from her piety. When the ordinary prayers were concluded, then began the long list of intentions to be prayed for, which included every conceivable need of the Church and of humanity. On one occasion at the close of a warm day, the confessor, who had been listening to the prolonged prayers in chapel, stepped up to Mother and said: "This suffices; let the Sisters out." Others might weary of the protracted kneeling in chapel, but Mother Agnes' piety seemed proof against every discomfort, and made the less fervent feel at times the truth of the words, "It is often a want of spirituality that makes the frail body so ready to complain."

In 1904, Mother Agnes had the great privilege of making a pilgrimage to Rome and the sacred shrines of Europe. Who could describe the holy joy of this good religious as she knelt at the feet of the Vicar of Christ and in the holy places sanctified by the presence of the Apostles and other great servants of God? This holy pilgrimage served indeed as a preparation for the closing days of her long career, and was a merited reward for her fidelity in God's service.

The year 1905, which marked the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Institute, was made memorable by a celebration which recalled the material and spiritual blessings bestowed by God upon the Community through which its efficiency and stability had been made possible. In this celebration no one had more reason to rejoice than Mother Agnes who alone knew the sacrifices she had undergone for the preservation of the Institute which she had directed for forty-two years. St. Francis Day, October 4th, was chosen for the festivities which began by the celebration of Mass by the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Falconio, who was a zealous member of the Franciscan Order. Later in the day, Solemn Pontifical Mass was sung by His Grace Most Reverend Archbishop Ryan. Among other distinguished Prelates present on this occasion were His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons, Right Reverend Bishop Horstmann of Cleveland, Right Reverend Bishop Monaghan of Wilmington, and Right Reverend Bishop Prendergast. Among the sixty priests in attendance, was the Reverend Aloysius Bachmann, O. F. M., of Tonawanda, New York. The day was one of reunion, for hither had come also Sister Mary Robertine of Buffalo, and Sister Mary Francis of Gardenville, New York. Mother Bernardine of Syracuse, formerly Miss Anna Dorn, one of the co-Foundresses of the Institute, was likewise present.

In 1909, Mother Agnes reached the golden milestone of her own religious profession when she pledged herself anew to her Heavenly Spouse and received the felicitations of her Sisters and friends. Among the notable ecclesiastics who took part in the celebration were Most Reverend Archbishop Ryan and Right Reverend Bishop

THE MOST REVEREND P. J. RYAN, D. D., LL. D.

Prendergast of Philadelphia; Right Reverend Bishop McFaul of Trenton; and Right Reverend Bishop Monaghan of Wilmington. Besides these, about sixty prominent priests were present in the sanctuary at the Solemn Pontifical Mass which was sung by Most Reverend Archbishop Ryan. The crowning blessing of the day was that sent by the Holy Father, Pius X, through a letter in which His Holiness likewise expressed the hope that the golden jubilee would be a pledge of spiritual joy and of heavenly benedictions. As an appreciative remembrance of the co-operation of the Sisters of St. Francis in the work of the Wilmington Diocese, where they had labored for thirty-five years, Bishop Monaghan on this occasion gave Mother Agnes a cottage at Rehoboth Beach where the Sisters might relax after the strenuous labors of the year. Here in their little Convent of St. Agnes-by-the-Sea, where they are refreshed by the cool sea breezes amidst delightful surroundings, the renewal of both physical and spiritual forces makes possible greater efficiency in the work of the Sisters during the ensuing year.

When in 1912, the voice of the great Archbishop Ryan was stilled in death, no one felt the loss more keenly than Mother Agnes to whom His Grace had ever been a devoted friend and counsellor. It was through his hearty co-operation that a marked expansion of the Order had been made possible; likewise the scope of its activity had been widened by the missions which were undertaken for the education of both the Indian and the negro in whom His Grace was particularly interested. Among the Sisters of St. Francis the name of Archbishop Ryan will always awaken the deepest reverence, and the memory of his loyalty and devotion to the Community will call forth sincerest gratitude.

During the last three years of her life, Mother Agnes was relieved of all active duty, and thus was the better able to satisfy her soul's longing for uninterrupted union with God. Her eagerness to attend the community exercises seemed to give additional strength to her enfeebled body, so that not until a few days before her death, in December of the year 1918, was she absent from her accustomed place in chapel. Near the Christmas holidays her unusually feeble step warned her superiors that the end was fast approaching. Of her own accord, she asked that she might be anointed; and although she fully realized that she had only a short time to live, her mind was perfectly at ease and her soul undisturbed. All thoughts of earth seemed to have vanished. On the morning of December 20th, came the message, "Veni, Sponsa Christi;" and so quietly did she answer the summons that those who were with her were unaware of the exact moment when she passed away. Apparently she had just fallen asleep like a tired child at the close of day. Her long life of devoted service had at last been crowned with the inestimable grace of a holy and a happy death.

Mother Agnes, whose reverence for the priesthood had been one of the dominant characteristics of her life, was honored on the day of her obsequies by the presence of more than fifty clergymen at the Solemn Requiem Mass which was celebrated at Our Lady of Angels by the Right Reverend Bishop McDevitt of Harrisburg.

Close beside the mortal remains of Reverend Mother Francis and in the company of many of her devoted spiritual daughters who had preceded her, Mother Agnes was laid to rest to await the summons of the Angel of the Resurrection and the reward of her well-spent life.

In her long career of over half a century, the achievements of this remarkable religious form a story which is interwoven with the constant increase in the needs of humanity. It is, moreover, the story of a true daughter of St. Francis—noble, generous, and resolute, who, having found the "pearl of great price," was eager to share her joy with others.

CHAPTER 3

Through Darkness Into Dawn

"After night the day returneth."

THE general gloom in the archdiocese of Philadelphia in the beginning of the memorable year 1918, occasioned by the loss of her many patriotic sons on the field of battle, had been deepened by the death of the beloved Shepherd, the Most Reverend Archbishop Prendergast. Spring had glided into summer, and still the tread of contending armies shook the civilized world. Institutions of all kinds were crippled by the departure of valuable employees for duty across the seas; while the willing service of those at home, who were forced to bear additional burdens, revealed many a hero as noble as those who offered their lives to preserve their country's honor. These were indeed "troublous times that tried men's souls" quite as much as in the days when colonial patriots contended for heaven-born rights denied them by a tyrannical foe. Every class of society had to bear its share of burden in the great world strife. Even in the cloister, where peace of mind is not ordinarily disturbed by passing events, there were grave fears as to what might be the outcome of "man's inhumanity to man."

As we resume our narrative of the Philadelphia Foundation of the Sisters of St. Francis, we find that, by canonical legislation, preparations were being made for convening a general chapter for electing a mother general to succeed Reverend Mother Aloysia who had served her allotted two successive terms. When the delegates met, they made know their choice by electing Mother Stanislaus, the pioneer missionary who had "blazed the trail" for the entrance of the Community into the Far West, and in her long career had given evidence of sterling qualities which recommended her for exercising higher superiorship. After her term as Western provincial had expired in 1909, Mother Stanislaus had been transferred to the East where she was given the superiorate of St. Paul's School, Wilmington. Here for six years she gave expression to her ardent zeal for souls by her efforts to foster in the children of the parish an appreciation of the favor granted by the saintly Pius X to nourish their souls by the daily reception of the Holy Eucharist. The next important position to which Mother Stanislaus was assigned was the superiorship of St. Elizabeth's School, Philadelphia, where she remained until transferred to St. Joseph's Hospital, Tacoma, Washington. Here Mother Stanislaus would gladly have spent the remainder of her days in the lowly task of soliciting aid for the improvement of the institution in whose foundation she had taken an active part. To be removed from the Western missionary fields had been a severe trial; and amidst her labors in the crowded cities of the East, her heart had turned yearningly to the land of "beautiful views and many miles" on far Pacific shores. In the summer of 1918, obedience again called her to make the long transcontinental journey to the mother house, where the great honor of the general superiorship of the Order awaited her. As we recall the events of the memorable years, 1918 and 1919, we shall see why God permitted that the mantle of authority should fall upon Mother Stanislaus whose varied experiences in her missionary career in the Far West had prepared her for the endurance of great trials.

Scarcely had the strenuous work of the summer been concluded, when the terrible influenza epidemic raised a cry of desolation, just as the dove of peace was about to spread his sheltering wings over the struggling world. War indeed had been a great calamity, robbing many a home of devoted sons; but this new visitation of God upon the country was to leave no home unvisited. Religious communities, too, had to share in the common woe by depletion in their ranks; but they gladly availed themselves of the privilege of entering the "service" of their country by administering to their plague-stricken neighbor. Relief work was early organized by the Sisters of St. Francis; and their excellent corps of trained nurses became efficient helpers in their country's hour of need. We find recorded instances of heroic service which called forth many a tribute of appreciation and added brilliant pages to the Community annals.

Mother Stanislaus had stood bravely at her post as superior general and directed the work of the Community. By the opening of the year 1920, the dreadful plague had spent itself. The tidings of peace, which had scarcely been heard amidst the distressing cries in desolated homes, at last sounded loud and clear; and the nation began to take on its old-time appearance of prosperity. Normal conditions were fast being restored in institutions that had given up devoted employees who had answered the call of their country. Among the Sisters of St. Francis, death had indeed reaped a goodly share of devoted laborers; but with a skillful readjustment of affairs, the houses of the Order were again carrying on their respective works with their usual efficiency.

Under ordinary circumstances, the performance of official duties in the Community which numbered almost a thousand members would itself have been a great drain on the physical powers; but with manifold additional burdens occasioned by the great epidemic, Mother Stanislaus' once robust constitution, which had withstood for many years the extraordinary hardships of Western missionary life, broke under the strain. Untiringly she had hastened from one scene of distress to another, consoling her spiritual daughters and inspiring them with courage to continue their work of mercy and charity. On the morning of January 17, 1920, the Community was startled by the intelligence which was hastily communicated from one convent to another that Mother Stanislaus had been suddenly overtaken by death. While on her visitation to St. Paul's Convent, Wilmington, the end came before the Sisters of the other missions were aware of her serious illness. As she had seemed somewhat indisposed on the morning of January 17th, she was prevailed upon not to attend the early Mass; and when the Sisters returned from church, they found her in a dying condition.

Ordinarily speaking, we should say that her death was untimely, as scarcely eighteen months of her term had expired; but when we consider that her life had been spent in close union with God and that she had ever been mindful of the injunction to "watch and pray," we readily conclude that death found her not unprepared. The cross which had been her portion in life was not to be wanting in her last hour, for so suddenly did the summons come that it was not possible to leave a final message to those who would have treasured her dying words.

In speaking of Mother Stanislaus, her panegyrist says that her life, which had run parallel to the life of the Order itself, was in large measure the history of the achievements of the Sisters of St. Francis. In the fifty years of her devoted service, she had witnessed the development of the Community, which had spread from the Atlantic seaboard to the Pacific; and, like the hero of old, she had actually been a part of it herself. Should we ask the secret of her power, we would find it like that of the Apostles, not in human prudence nor in worldly wisdom, but in unremitting prayer, —prayer in season and out of season. When the Cure of Ars was asked by a critic where he learned his philosophy, he answered that he had had the same master as St. Peter. Mother Stanislaus, too, might have given a like answer had she been questioned about her learning. Ability she had, undoubtedly, but she was ever ready to acknowledge, "Of myself, I am nothing, I have nothing, and I can do nothing, but I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me." Prayer began, accompanied, and followed every work undertaken. It was the one lesson taught by Mother Francis over and over again. Mother Stanislaus had learned it well; and this tradition has been admirably preserved in the Order and has been the keynote of the success of every work accomplished.

Other qualities combined to make of Mother Stanislaus a great power in the Community and in the world around her. Her kind, affable manner made her accessible to all; while her sympathetic disposition readily consoled the afflicted and elicited the greatest confidence. That quality which most endeared her to her Sisters in religion was her motherly interest in all that concerned their welfare. On noting the warm welcome which Mother Stanislaus gave her spiritual daughters as she greeted them on their return to the mother house for the annual retreat, a clergyman remarked, "The Sisters of St. Francis have indeed a mother." But above all, Mother Stanislaus was a model religious, a true Franciscan, heart and soul, devoted to her rule and all the observances it enjoins, and "loyal to the Society with that loyalty which only great souls know."

Mother Stanislaus' remarkable confidence in prayer was manifested soon after her entrance into office as superior general when she learned of the serious illness of Mother Kilian, then superior of St. Joseph's Academy, Pendleton, Oregon. Upon receiving a telegram stating that she had but a few hours to live, Mother

Stanislaus hastened to communicate the sad news to the Community at Our Lady of Angels, and announced that a novena to the Sacred Heart would be commenced at once. Those who joined in these prayers for the recovery of Mother Kilian will certainly never forget the earnest pleadings of good Mother Stanislaus to the Divine Heart to spare the life of her devoted co-worker of pioneer days in Oregon. "The prayer of faith," says St. James, "shall heal the sick." The Great Healer who so often exercised His power in His earthly career and down through the ages, is in our own day no less disposed to grant the desires of those who approach Him in humble submission to His will. Mother Stanislaus' trustful prayer was answered. Mother Kilian was restored to health, and by a strange dispensation of God's Providence became her successor in office, when her own work on earth had come to a close.

The broken threads of administration for a time were carefully gathered up by Mother Aloysia who had stood like a good and faithful sentinel at her post as vicar-general, intently watching every scene in the sad drama that had been enacted during Mother Stanislaus' brief superiorship.

In the summer of 1920, the dawn of a new day appeared when Mother Kilian of the Western Province was placed in supreme command to direct the Community then nearing the goal of its diamond years. The joyous, happy disposition of Mother Kilian seemed in harmony with the times; for with the return of peace to the world, Heaven seemed to smile again upon the earth and everywhere there was awakened new interest in life. The Community of the Sisters of St. Francis, too, was to feel this renewal of energy under the leadership of Mother Kilian whose progressive spirit was an inheritance from the great West, where are bred the initiative and self-reliance and that persevering energy which have transformed barren deserts into blooming gardens, and made vocal the hills and valleys with the hum of every industry.

Reverend Mother Kilian's keen foresight enabled her to dispose effectively of the various affairs that were proposed for her decision; and in an incredibly short time the Community entered upon a career of expansion and extension scarcely less remarkable than that inaugurated by Reverend Mother Agnes. Within the decade of years that has elapsed since her entrance into office, Reverend Mother Kilian has founded twenty-seven missions, which include eighteen parochial schools, two academies, a day nursery and working girls' home, a hospital, two orphan asylums, and a home for the aged poor. While this varied list of works shows Reverend Mother Kilian's high regard for Christian education, it also shows that her sympathetic nature led her to consider the sufferings of the sick, the protection of working girls, and the helplessness of infancy as well as of old age.

At the request of His Eminence Cardinal Dougherty, a mission at Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, was undertaken for the care of destitute children. The Home was formerly an old country mansion, set in the midst of over a hundred goodly acres. Here "God's little aristocracy" are being cared for in very pleasant and healthful surroundings, and enjoy many comforts which even the children of the rich might envy.

In the establishment of the working girls' home in Philadelphia, in 1922, there is a renewal of the spirit of the Order when Mother Francis gathered around her in the humble nursery of the infant Community a few poor working girls, to whom she offered the blessed protection of a Christian home and safeguarded their innocence by her motherly counsels. The need of such a home is today far more imperative when vice arrays itself in such attractive form that only the most wary may detect its deceptive charms. While the maintenance of proper discipline in the Home requires special tact and prudence, and the responsibilities are great, nevertheless, the work is a laudable one, and the spiritual fruitage resulting therefrom must appear in God's own time.

The day nursery which has been connected with the Home is another worthy charity which conditions in a great city call for most insistently. To have rescued souls already tainted with vice and to place them within the refining influences of religion is a great work; but greater far is the charity which preserves innocent little minds from the corruption of the wicked and helps feeble little charges to attain normal physical and mental growth. This is the work accomplished in a day nursery in charge of a Catholic Sisterhood, which, from the ultimate end in view, may be truly called "a nursery of immortality."

In the two school missions recently undertaken in Tacony, the once little country village where the Community conducted its first orphan asylum, there is another reminder of primitive days. Where seventy years ago Catholicity was scarcely strong enough to support even one church, there are today several thriving parishes; and the one-time little village, the great city of Philadelphia now claims as one of its suburban possessions.

In the establishment of St. Francis Hospital, Wilmington, Delaware, in 1924, was realized a long-cherished dream of the people of the city for an institution where their sick might be cared for by Sisters. An appeal to Reverend Mother Kilian to undertake the work met with a ready response. Through the Right Reverend Bishop Monaghan, a campaign was inaugurated to secure funds to finance the institution. The magnificent sum that was realized thereby is a grand testimony to the zeal of the clergy of the diocese and the good will of the people who responded so generously.

St. Francis Hospital is small when compared with the other institutions of the kind conducted by the Sisters of St. Francis, but in efficiency of service it is unexcelled. There is, too, in the little hospital, a restful home atmosphere about the sick rooms that soothes the mind of the sufferer and assuages in great measure the sorrow of separation from the family circle.

Another manifestation of the interest of the Sisters of St. Francis in the welfare of the aged poor is the Home which was provided at Tamaqua, Pennsylvania. The house and grounds were secured through the munificence of His Eminence Cardinal Dougherty, whose promotion of charitable enterprises in his vast diocese has kept pace with the increasing needs of the poor of his numerous flock. The Home was dedicated September 18, 1927. The ceremony was both simple and impressive in which the great Cardinal of Philadelphia, vested in the scarlet robes which distinguish his high office was assisted by his secretary, the Reverend Doctor O'Hara, and the humble Friar Minor chaplain clothed in the sombre penitential garb of his Order. Nothing has been left undone at St. Michael's that would add to the comfort and happiness of the old people and make the institution in every way deserving of the name—home, and worthy of the protection of its angelic patron.

Plans have now been approved for a magnificent institution for the aged at Fountain Springs, Pennsylvania. The building when completed will repose as an architectural gem in the midst of the two-hundred-acre tract of land given recently for the purpose by His Eminence Cardinal Doughtery.

Of the many improvements recently made at Our Lady of Angels is the new home provided for the aged members of the Community whose days of active service are over. The building long known as the "Professed House" has been completely remodeled so that every facility for caring for these deserving members has been considered. One of the most commendable features of the new home is its accessibility to the chapel, which makes it feasible for those not completely disabled to assist at Mass and the community exercises. Efficiently trained nurses are in charge of the infirmary, and they devote their entire time to the care of these aged heroines whose lives have been spent in the service of the Community fighting the battles against sin, disease, and ignorance, and watching as sentinels at the outposts of the Community in lowly offices where no eye save God's was a witness of their lonely vigils. By the generous renunciation of their worldly goods to serve the Lady Poverty, they indeed receive the hundred-fold through the loving care of those who now direct their feeble steps and support their infirmities with tender Christ-like devotion.

It is the Sisters who attend the Summer School who are especially grateful for the beautiful campus and grove south of the novitiate which was purchased recently. Here in shady nooks of Nature's cloister of beautiful trees, they may study in pleasant and healthful surroundings, and may rest their tired nerves when the day's tasks are ended.

A special provision made for those who perform the lowly tasks of the Community, is a modern kitchen and a cold storage plant.

The spiritual welfare of the Sisters was considered in the erection of the Stations on the convent grounds. Thus has been made more realistic the pious practice of making the Way of the Cross. The devotion is particularly Franciscan—an inheritance from the Saint of the Crucified, who was found worthy to bear in his body the precious marks of the Lord Jesus.

A high appreciation of the value of inspiring music as an aid to devotion led Reverend Mother Kilian to have a new Austin pipe organ installed at Our Lady of Angels. The remodeling and deco-

1. ST. MICHAEL'S HOME
TAMAQUA, PA.

2. ST. FRANCIS HOSPITAL
WILMINGTON, DEL.

3. THE LITTLE FLOWER SCHOOL
BALTIMORE, MD.

rating of the chapel, and the introduction of a system of electric lighting, which serves to bring out more effectively the beauty of God's house, are other evidences of a desire to honor the Eucharistic King who resides on His lowly altar throne in the convent chapel.

The completion of the new novitiate building which today adorns the convent grounds is the crowning act of Reverend Mother Kilian's ten years of patient, unremitting labor and an expression of progressiveness and energy of mind which planned its erection in spite of impaired health and a multiplicity of affairs which seemed to preclude the advisability of assuming additional responsibilities.

Other improvements, suggestive of an appreciation of both the useful and the beautiful, have made the surroundings at Our Lady of Angels more attractive, and have added to the comfort and convenience of the Sisters, who, on their occasional return to the home circle, find new evidences of the maternal care of their good Reverend Mother, who has sought in their absence to increase the joy of their home-coming.

But it is not material things alone that Reverend Mother Kilian has considered. It is particularly by her efforts to "keep the home fires burning" on the convent hearth, to make the bond of Christian affection firm and strong between the members of the Community, and to promote that sweet spirit of charity which "hopeth all things, endureth all things," that she has strengthened the foundation of all the religious houses of the Order; and thereby her term of office, we may truly say, has been blessed by Heaven, for "it is this sweet home feeling," as Irving says, "this settled repose of affection in the domestic scene, that is after all, the parent of the steadiest virtues and the purest enjoyment."

CHAPTER 4

Ring Out, Ye Bells, Ring Out

"Praise the Lord for He is good: for His mercy . . . .

COMMENSURATE with the progress of the Institute of the Sisters of St. Francis, are the sacrifices which were made in its foundation. When first the whisperings of the Holy Spirit urged Mother Francis to make the renunciation of all that life held dear, she might have asked with the humble Virgin of Nazareth, "How can this be done?" But there were no questionings. In the same spirit as she who had magnanimously replied to the angelic messenger, "Be it done unto me according to thy word," Mother Francis made no delay in putting herself in readiness to carry out what she sincerely believed to be God's will. A short life of constant self-renunciation amidst poverty and hardships, laboring often for those who repaid her only by ingratitude, she humbly laid the foundation of the Institute of the Sisters of St. Francis; and today twelve hundred devoted spiritual children in their happy convent homes recall the story of her heroic life, while jubilee bells ring out her triumph.

Mother Francis cherished no vain desires to make a name for herself, as her victory was too dearly bought to be lost in mundane glory. Rather would she have asked of the Lord as did the humble Christian Brother, "If I succeed, dear Lord, do not let me know of my success." The scope of the work to be accomplished was certainly never dreamed of by the humble Foundress of the Society. In her lifetime, there was even no assurance that the Institute would endure.

As we view today the numerous hospitals, schools, orphan asylums, homes for the aged, and other institutions of benefaction under the direction of her spiritual daughters, we may well exclaim, "What hath God not wrought!" While they represent the skill of master architects and an outlay of millions of dollars, their existence is due with God's help to the humble persevering efforts of religious women who have cherished the counsel of their beloved Foundress, "Let poverty be your treasure." Upon this foundation the noble structures of the Order have arisen.

While the Sisters of St. Francis have endeavored by their own industry to secure means for carrying on their various works and have been admirable financiers, they have not disdained to solicit aid from time to time to assist in the care of their needy neighbor. It is the spirit of St. Francis, the Poor Little Man of Assisi, who counselled his Brethren to go from door to door, saying with the prophet, "That assuredly is the Bread of Angels which is asked for love of God, and by the suggestion of Angels is given by the charity of those at whose doors it is asked by holy poverty." "Having nothing and yet possessing all things," the spiritual daughters of Mother Francis have reared monuments to her memory in the great institutions of the Order in which are continued the works inauspiciously initiated under her guidance in the humble nursery of the infant Community and in the homes of the poor.

At the jubilee festal scenes the venerable Foundress and her valiant band of laborers, whom the Angel Reaper has removed from the scenes of earth to the spirit land, will hover near through the sacred bonds of affection, and inspire holy desires to uphold the glorious traditions of the Institute that its future may be secure.

Another there is whose name will be pronounced with reverence and evoke holy and happy memories and sincerest gratitude—Venerable Bishop Neumann. How well, beloved Father, could you now answer the question of your anxious heart as you stood lonely and friendless on that memorable day of your landing on the great American shores, and said within yourself, "What will my future be?" Did, perchance, your good angel whisper the answer that consoled and strengthened you to bear the loneliness and the weariness of your ministry on a foreign shore and the burden of your episcopal office? Did you in a far-off vision behold your spiritual daughters who were to assist you in your pious works and by the holiness of their lives increase your joy in time and eternity? Surely now, Venerable Bishop, they will, by their earnest prayers, hasten that glad day when the Church may place you on her altars among the first flowers of American sanctity.

At the festive board will be recalled, too, the many friends of the Institute sent by Divine Providence. These often prepared the way for the beginning of the pious works of the Community, and by their encouragement and the generous sharing of their worldly store assisted in the erection and the maintenance of the various houses of the Order. And their name is legion—from the quaint old Quaker physician of the long ago to the princely benefactors of today, among whom are those with faith and again those of nc particular creed,—Catholics, Protestants, Jews, atheists—all united in a common cause, the love of their neighbor.

Among those still in the ranks, who may rejoice as no other with a truly holy joy at the crowning day of the diamond years, is Mother Mary Aloysia who alone of all that valiant band of fervent pioneers still lingers on grandly alone—"the last leaf on the tree," clinging to life at the will of the good God who still leaves her to be "a lamp to the feet" of her spiritual daughters and "a light unto the path thereof." Enriched with the treasures of inspiration gathered from contact with both the saintly Bishop Neumann and the beloved Foundress, Mother Aloysia now in the golden glow of the evening of life, leads the joyful procession of the Sisters of St. Francis in the festive scenes of today, radiant with the glory of seventy years of fidelity in the Master's service.

As the scope of the work of the Institute has widened so as to include almost every spiritual and corporal work of mercy, so has the field of labor been extended in accordance with Franciscan ideals. While the pioneer members of the Society did not venture beyond the cradle-home of the Order, as soon as conditions permitted, the Community expanded, so that today missions are found in seventeen dioceses in a territory extending from the old colonial Puritan land of New England on the north to the once fenceless territory on the south where the Indian roamed at will, and west to the Pacific shores.

The variety of activities carried on in the Congregation gives opportunity for the employment of every kind of talent, so that in the personnel of the Community may be found those skilled in every profession which offers a possibility for the exercise of woman's genius. As the Community is democratic in spirit, there is no distinction made between those who perform the manual labor of the convent and those in the higher offices. All follow the same rule, and, according to the counsel of St. Francis, "hasten to render each other mutual service," as prescribed by the constitutions, "Let each one in a spirit of humility believe herself to be the servant of all the rest."

While the Institute was founded in America, and its activities have not extended beyond the homeland, in recent years countries of the Old World have furnished contingents to the Society,—England, Ireland, Germany, France, Portugal, Italy, and even faraway Syria. And in this we are reminded of the days when St. Francis' heart was gladdened by the assurance of the spread of his Order, through the vision in which he beheld all nations moved and all roads thronged by those who were hastening to the Society to execute the orders of holy obedience. In his greatheartedness the Holy Man of Assisi embraced the whole world and the whole world in turn came to him, so that we may truly say that he is "everybody's Saint," "everybody's St. Francis."

"The strength of a nation," says William Jennings Bryan, "does not lie in navies, nor in great standing armies, but in happy, contented citizens, who are ever ready to protect for themselves and to preserve for posterity the blessings which they enjoy." The strength of the Community, then, we may say, does not depend upon the number or grandeur of its buildings, nor upon the multiplicity of its activities, but upon its members, who, like St. Francis, in true simplicity of heart rejoice in the Lord, and are ever ready to offer cheerful service to their neighbor, with that charity which enables them to "become all things to all men in order to gain all things for Christ." With this spirit they communicate to others the sweetness to be found in God's service and the joy that is in their own heart, and thus attract others to the Fountain of Charity.

In the Community founded under the patronage of the great Saint of Assisi, which now joyfully recounts the triumphs of its diamond years, devoted religious are endeavoring to uphold the traditions of the Institute, and hopefully anticipate that God may ever watch over this first native flower in the Garden of St. Francis in our beloved country, that it may continue to adorn the Church by the beauty and fragrance of its deeds, and deserve by the utility of its mission the fadeless glory of "subsisting to the end of ages."

Under the continued protection of Mary, the Immaculate

Mother of God, to whom the Institute was confided in the days of its infancy, may we not hope that with the passing years the progress of the Society may be a joy to its heavenly Protectress? "Heaven and earth," says St. Francis, "recognize no other name after that of her dear Son, which has procured for us so many graces, has sustained our hopes so effectually, or has afforded us such sweet delight."

Sharing with this most gracious Queen the glad conviction that "the sole end of the creature is the service of the Creator," the children of the Seraphic Saint may cherish the hope to receive through her intercession the grace to say with hearts aglow with love, "My God and my All!" and to make daily more conquests for Christ the King.

Hail Mary!

> "Sweet benediction in the eternal curse!
> Veiled glory of this lampless universe!"

Hail, "thou exaltation of humanity," "thou ennobler of our race," "mother of beautiful love, of fear, of knowledge, and of holy hope," in whom all womanhood finds its most glorious exemplar among creatures! Hail, our hope!

Appendix

1. LIST OF MISSIONS WITH DATE OF THEIR FOUNDATION
2. DIOCESES AND ARCHDIOCESES IN WHICH MISSIONS ARE ESTABLISHED
3. THE VARIOUS WORKS OF THE INSTITUTE
4. OFFICIALS OF THE COMMUNITY (1930)

1. List of Missions with Date of Their Foundation

1.	Our Lady of Angels, Mother House and Novitiate, Glen Riddle, Delaware County, Pa.	Sept.	7, 1871
*2.	St. Francis Convent, Provincial House of the Eastern Province, Philadelphia	Sept.	28, 1858
3.	St. Alphonsus School, Philadelphia, Pa.	Oct.	1, 1858
4.	St. Mary's Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa.	Dec.	10, 1860
5.	All Saints School, Bridesburg, Pa.	Sept.	2, 1864
6.	St. Joseph's Hospital, Baltimore, Md.	Sept.	25, 1864
7.	St. Mary's School, Manayunk, Pa.	Jan.	22, 1868
8.	St. Joseph's School, Lancaster, Pa.	Aug.	30, 1868
9.	Holy Trinity School, Columbia, Pa.	Sept.	4, 1869
10.	St. Mary's School, York, Pa.	Nov.	22, 1869
11.	St. Joseph's School, Brandywine, Del.	Sept.	29, 1870
12.	Sacred Heart School, Allentown, Pa.	Oct.	2, 1871
13.	St. Bonifacius School, St. Clair, Pa.	Oct.	2, 1871
14.	St. Francis Hospital, Trenton, N. J.	Oct.	8, 1872
15.	St. Joseph's Hospital, Reading, Pa.	July	16, 1873
16.	St. Mauritius School, Ashland, Pa.	Apr.	8, 1874
17.	St. Fidelis School, Mahanoy City, Pa.	Sept.	8, 1874
18.	St. Elizabeth's School, Philadelphia, Pa.	Dec.	18, 1874
19.	Holy Ghost School, South Bethlehem, Pa.	Jan.	28, 1875
20.	St. Bernard's School, Doylestown, Pa.	Feb.	2, 1876
21.	St. Joseph's School, Fullerton, Md.	Jan.	1, 1878
22.	St. Rose's School, Freehold, N. J.	Sept.	8, 1878
23.	St. James Protectory, Reybold, Del.	Sept.	8, 1879
24.	Immaculate Conception School, Trenton, N. J.	Mar.	19, 1880
25.	St. Agnes School, Lock Haven, Pa.	Aug.	30, 1881
26.	St. Mary's School, Catasauqua, Pa.	Aug.	25, 1882
27.	St. Joseph's Hospital, Lancaster, Pa.	Aug.	31, 1883
28.	St. Joseph's School, S. Easton, Pa.	Sept.	20, 1884
29.	St. Francis Academy, Baker City, Ore.	Aug.	24, 1885
30.	SS. Peter and Paul School, Lehighton, Pa.	Aug.	30, 1886
31.	St. Anthony's School, Provincial House of the Southern Province, Gardenville, Md.	Sept.	18, 1886
32.	St. Mary's School, Wilmington, Del.	Aug.	8, 1887
33.	St. Paul's School, Wilmington, Del.	Aug.	30, 1887
34.	St. Joseph's Academy, Provincial House and Novitiate of the Western Province, Pendleton, Ore.	Aug.	30, 1887
35.	St. Elizabeth's Indian School, Purcell, Okla.	Feb.	1, 1888

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* Residence of Sisters teaching in the John Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School; the Catholic Girls' High School, West Philadelphia; and St. Joseph's House for Homeless Boys, Philadelphia.

36.	St. Agnes Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa.	May 15, 1888
37.	St. George's Indian School, Tacoma, Wash.	Aug. 27, 1888
38.	St. Patrick's School, Wilmington, Del.	Sept. 1, 1888
39.	Most Blessed Sacrament School, Bally, Pa.	Aug. 1, 1889
40.	St. Bonaventura's School, Philadelphia, Pa.	Feb. 19, 1890
41.	St. Andrew's Indian School, Pendleton, Ore.	Feb. 25, 1890
42.	St. Peter Claver's Colored School, Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 21, 1890
43.	St. Paul's School, Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 21, 1890
44.	St. Mary's School, Minersville, Pa.	Aug. 22, 1890
45.	St. Joseph's Home for Colored Boys, Wilmington, Del.	Aug. 22, 1890
46.	St. Joseph's Orphanage, Spokane, Wash.	Aug. 22, 1890
47.	St. Joseph's Hospital, Tacoma, Wash.	Jan. 23, 1891
48.	St. Francis Home, Roxbury, Boston, Mass.	Jan. 23, 1891
49.	St. Louis School, Philadelphia, Pa.	Sept. 8, 1891
50.	St. Joseph's Hospital, Providence, R. I.	Mar. 19, 1892
51.	St. Stephen's Indian Mission, St. Stephen, Wyo.	Aug. 15, 1892
52.	Mt. St. Joseph's Academy, Tekoa, Wash.	Aug. 15, 1892
53.	St. Patrick's Indian School, Anadarko, Okla.	Sept. 8, 1892
54.	St. Mary's Home, New Brunswick, N. J.	Feb. 2, 1893
55.	Mt. St. Mary's College (Domestic Dept.), Emmitsburg, Md.	Aug. 28, 1893
56.	St. Nicholas School, Egg Harbor, N. J.	Sept. 17, 1893
57.	Sacred Heart Academy, LaGrande, Ore.	Sept. 1, 1894
58.	St. Mary's Home, New Bedford, Mass.	Sept. 19, 1894
59.	St. Joseph's Industrial School for Colored Boys, Clayton, Del.	Sept. 2, 1895
60.	St. Francis de Sales School, Lenni, Pa.	Sept. 2, 1895
61.	Holy Family School, Shenandoah, Pa.	Aug. 27, 1896
62.	St. Bonifacius School, New Haven, Conn.	Aug. 27, 1896
63.	St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Baker City, Ore.	Aug. 25, 1897
64.	St. Michael's Orphanage, Hopewell, N. J.	June 1, 1898
65.	Georgetown University Hospital, Washington, D. C.	June 1, 1898
66.	Holy Family School, Cape Charles, Va.	Sept. 1, 1898
67.	St. Joseph's School, Chickasha, Okla.	Aug. 25, 1899
68.	St. Ann's School, Wilmington, Del.	Aug. 30, 1899
69.	St. Anthony's Hospital, Pendleton, Ore.	June 13, 1902
70.	St. Elizabeth's School, Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 23, 1902
71.	St. James School, Arctic, R. I.	Aug. 23, 1902
72.	St. Thomas School, Wilmington, Del.	Sept. 8, 1903
73.	St. Catherine of Siena's School, Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 30, 1904
74.	St. Joseph's Sanatorium, Hills Grove, R. I.	Sept. 8, 1904
75.	Morris Hall for the Aged, Lawrenceville, N. J.	May 24, 1905
76.	St. Agnes-by-the-Sea, Rehoboth Beach, Del. (Summer Home)	June 13, 1905

77.	St. Lawrence's School, Catasauqua, Pa.	Aug. 30, 1905
78.	St. Peter's School, New Castle, Del.	Aug. 16, 1906
79.	Nativity B. V. M. School, Media, Pa.	Sept. 8, 1912
80.	St. Leo's School, Tacoma, Wash.	Sept. 17, 1912
81.	Holy Trinity School, Boston, Mass.	Aug. 28, 1913
82.	St. Aloysius School, Pottstown, Pa.	Aug. 28, 1913
83.	St. Joseph's School, East York, Pa.	Aug. 31, 1914
84.	St. Gertrude's School, Lebanon, Pa.	Aug. 29, 1916
85.	SS. Philip and James School, Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 29, 1917
86.	Resurrection of Our Lord School, Chester, Pa.	Aug. 8, 1918
87.	St. Stanislaus School, Lansdale, Pa.	Aug. 18, 1919
88.	St. Joseph's Slovak School, Raritan, N. J.	Aug. 28, 1920
89.	St. John Baptist School, Stiles (Coplay), Pa.	Aug. 30, 1920
90.	St. Ann's Orphanage, Fern Hill, Tacoma, Wash.	Feb. 10, 1921
91.	St. Francis Orphan Asylum, Orwigsburg, Pa.	Apr. 28, 1921
92.	St. Anthony's School, Trenton, N. J.	Sept. 12, 1921
93.	St. Joseph's Day Nursery and Home for Working Girls, Philadelphia, Pa.	July 15, 1922
94.	Holy Angels School, Trenton, N. J.	Sept. 5, 1922
95.	St. Mary Magdalene's School, Lost Creek, Pa.	Aug. 28, 1923
96.	Sacred Heart Academy, Klamath Falls, Oregon	June 2, 1924
97.	St. Francis Hospital, Wilmington, Del.	Aug. 28, 1924
98.	St. Patrick's School, Portland, Oregon	Aug. 13, 1925
99.	St. Bernard's School, Raritan, N. J.	Aug. 31, 1925
100.	St. Bartholomew's School, Brockton, Pa.	Sept. 1, 1925
101.	St. Benedict's School, Philadelphia, Pa.	Sept. 7, 1925
102.	Nativity of Our Lord School, Brightwood, Washington, D. C.	Sept. 8, 1925
103.	Immaculate Conception High School, Towson, Md.	Aug. 18, 1926
104.	Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School, Middle River, Md.	Aug. 28, 1926
105.	St. Hubert's School, Tacony, Philadelphia, Pa.	Sept. 1, 1926
106.	St. Michael's Home for Aged, Tamaqua, Pa.	July 11, 1927
107.	Blessed Sacrament School, Trenton, N. J.	Aug. 26, 1927
108.	St. Joseph's School, Dallastown, Pa.	Aug. 27, 1927
109.	"Little Flower" School, Baltimore, Md.	Sept. 1, 1927
110.	Our Lady of Angels, House of Studies, Washington, D. C.	April 11, 1928
111.	St. Vincent de Paul's School, Baltimore, Md.	Aug. 29, 1928
112.	Our Lady of Consolation School, Tacony, Pa.	Sept. 8, 1928
113.	St. Joseph's Indian School, Chamberlain, S. D.	Sept. 12, 1928
114.	St. John's School, Wasco, Calif.	Sept. 9, 1929

2. Dioceses and Archdioceses in Which Missions are Established

	No. of Houses
Philadelphia	38
Baltimore	16
Wilmington	13
Trenton	12
Baker City	7
Harrisburg	7
Oklahoma	3
Providence	3
Seattle	4
Spokane	2
Boston	2
Altoona	1
Hartford	1
Fall River	1
Cheyenne	1
Oregon City	1
Monterey-Fresno	1
Sioux Falls	1
Total	114

3. The Various Works of the Institute

Parochial Schools	71
Academies and High Schools	15
Orphanages	7
Homes for the Aged	2
Day Nurseries	2
Hospitals	13
Schools and Homes for the Colored	3
Indian Missions	6
Home for Working Girls	1
College (Domestic Dept.)	1

The Sisters teach also in twenty-six Commercial and High Schools. Most of these are connected with parish schools.

Total Number Professed Sisters	1126
Total Number Novices	121
Total Number Postulants	81

Officials of the Community

1930

The General Council

Reverend Mother Mary Kilian, *Superior General*
Mother Mary Nothburga, *Vicar-General and First Consultor*
Sister Mary Ildephonse, *Second Consultor*
Sister Mary Georgina, *Third Consultor*
Sister Mary Maurilla, *Fourth Consultor*

Provincial Superiors

Mother Mary Stella, *Eastern Province*
Mother Mary Fridolin, *Southern Province*
Mother Mary Immaculate, *Western Province*

General Directress of Schools

Sister Mary Mildred

General Procurator

Sister Mary Gratiana

297.47
B 259

AUTHOR

Barnaba, Mary

TITLE

crown for christ the king

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